

EDINBURGH CHAMBERS' JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, EDITORS OF "CHAMBERS'S INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE,"
"CHAMBERS'S EDUCATIONAL COURSE," &c.

PRINTED BY W. AND R. CHAMBERS, 19, WATERLOO PLACE, EDINBURGH.

NUMBER 380.

SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1839.

PRICE THREE HALFPENCE.

STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY.

BY MRS S. C. HALL.

"Mind not high things; but condescend to men of low estate."
ST PAUL.

THE LANDLORD ABROAD.

It was a bright, yet a weeping morning—the sun was shining, but thick heavy clouds flitted across the heavens, sometimes softening, sometimes altogether obscuring its rays; the birds were singing cheerfully in the hedges, whose leaves bent beneath the rain-drops; and the poultry in Widow Clement's little yard were shaking the moisture off their wings.

"Look at that beautiful Norah," said the widow to her daughter Peggy, Norah being a favourite hen of snowy plumage; "she's just as fretted at the feathers being wet upon her, as you'd be if Paul Kinsala saw a dirty handkerchief—"

"Lave off, mother," interrupted the daughter, blushing, and turning her wheel with such increased velocity that the thread snapped; "lave off—what's Paul Kinsala to me?"

"Och, Peggy, for shame, to be throwing sand in yer mother's eyes!" exclaimed the widow.

"Throwing sand in yer eyes, mother darlint, eh!—then the girl's not born yet that could do that, I'm thinking. Well, mother, if I have a kindness to him, sure he's well to do."*

"He was well to do, Peggy mavournen; but the lase of his farm, little as it is, and high as the rent was, is out."

"But sure the agent, Mr Crumbie, heard my Lord promise him a renewal, and a taking off of three pounds in the year, on account of the improvements he made."

The widow shook her head—those who grow old in the country learn to understand human nature as well as those who read the more varied page of town life.

"He never said he wouldn't grant the renewal," continued Peggy, looking anxiously in her mother's face.

"He never said he would," was the reply. There was a long silence. Widow Clement sighed, and continued her knitting. Peggy did not sigh, but she went on spinning, as if nothing had been said to give her pain; but her mother noted the heaving of her bosom. Twice she rose under pretence of seeing if the grey hen who was seated upon her eggs in a corner was covering them as she ought; her mother knew she moved to conceal her tears. "Peggeen gra, never heed the hen; the nature's in her to manage her eggs herself, and looking at her only disturbs her; it's an insult to her, Peggy, and we mustn't hurt her feelings. Sorra a finer hen in the parish afther a brood than that same grey-malkin, as the darlint young mistress used to call her. Why, thin, Peggy, I often think I'd like to see Lady Ellen in the court at London, fore-nint the king and queen, and all the grandees looking at her. I'll go bail she takes the shine out of them all!"

"I dare say she does," replied Peggy; "I don't doubt that; but sure it would be fitter for his lordship to come and stay among his people, in the country where his forefathers' bones makes part of the soil, and where the grass grows, the corn ears, the water flows, the cattle dies, all for him, than to be laving those that's bred, born, and reared under him and his, for I don't know how many thousand or hundred years, to the bitter wrath of an agent, and all belonging to him. And what's the upshot of it all?"

"Heart trouble, a-lannan; and discontent even when there's no reason; like all the mimbers fighting one another for want of a head—that's what it is!"

* Well off.

replied the widow sorrowfully. "The nature of man and beast is not to be put upon by its equals, and the landlord could do more with us than another, for he's the protector placed over the land to see justice done to his dependents." The widow paused; her reasoning was the reasoning of a class more numerous formerly than at present—a class of well-disposed affectionate persons, who looked up to their landlord as a friend and counsellor in all trouble: it is a pity such confidence should ever be misplaced. The absentee landlord knows but little of the affections or feelings of his tenants, and, it is much to be feared, cares less. After a moment, Widow Clement resumed—"And yet, sure, when we pay our rent, and are honest, we can stand as straight before God as the landlord himself."

"And straighter," added Peggy, smiling.

"That's a bright girl, Peggy; it joys my heart to see the smile in yer eye, my own girl! Sure when the Almighty gave me you and your brother, He let fall a blessing from each hand; praise be to His holy name! It's little we have to complain of ourselves, though the family is in furrin parts—Mark, being my lord's groom, is on the spot to take care of us—but it's for the neighbours my heart bleeds. The cottages that in the ould lady's lifetime war the admiration of the country, are falling to decay; the pigs that used to be kept to themselves, are free of the roads again; many have turned their face from their people's graves, who couldn't pay the rack-rent; the sorra a thing thrives in the place, Peggeen gra, but the whisky-shops and boys,* that I remember quiet and industrious when the lord was in it, and kept the improvements going on, and more than a hundred men at them winter and summer; them very boys, that never handled a shillall, barring at a fair, or for a bit of sport at Shrove or Martinmas, are in constant practice with it now, wheeling through the country by day, and not trusting to sticks only at night."

"Hush, mother!" exclaimed Peggy; "least said soonest mended. Only I wish Lady Ellen was in it again, like a sweet moss-rose as she always was. It's not the same place since the people war turned over to strangers;" and Peggy sighed bitterly as she spoke.

This was true; the old Lady Killbally died, leaving no heir to the property, and but one fair daughter, the "Lady Ellen" whom Peggy sighed for. Lady Killbally had been a blessing to her tenantry; but after her death his lordship imagined he required change of scene for a longer period than usual—indeed, he generally spent one or two months of every year in England, and returned with new ideas and new plans for the improvement of his hereditary estate. Alas, and alas! he did not mourn long. Before the twelve-month was expired, he had married a woman of fashion, who had no idea of reciprocal duties between landlord and tenant; and though she visited Killbally, it was evident she would not reside there.

Lord Killbally made a speech at the county town, previous to quitting the country to "winter" in London, full of the most sublime sentiments of patriotism; he had never talked about it before: he recommended his new agent, a stranger, to the friendship of the gentry, as if friendship, even in warm-hearted Ireland, grew on the furze bushes, and could be pulled off and appropriated at pleasure; and he begged of his tenants to respect the laws—as yet, they had never been violated in his neighbourhood.

"Where's the good of behaving as we have done?" said the Killbally smith, and a party of loose-coated Irishmen gathered round him as he spoke; "where's the good of behaving as we have done! We never

* This term means all unmarried men, no matter what their ages.

gainsaid him; we never riz a ruction at fair or pattern for fear we'd displace him. We paid our rent, when we had it, regular; and when we didn't, why, he was never cruel on us. We never voted agin him; we sent all our children to get the larning at his, or Lady Ellen's schools; we planted trees; we kept up our pigs; we made back-doors to our houses; we took oaths against the whisky—and all to please him. Our prayers were heavy on him, yet he'll go from us, boys—he'll go from us, and lave us a black-a-riced agent, a stranger to our hearts and homes, who doesn't understand us, nor we him—he'll go from us, as the good, the dear ould, and the purty young, lady did. He'll melt off like snow in summer; he'll go from us, and keep from us; he'll be an absentee; he'll forget to feel for us. Mark my words: for all this fine talk, in three months the workmen will be discharged; there'll be no traffic in the place. God help poor Ireland! She's ever and always treated as Barney Barret treated his cow—fed on thraneens, and then abused for giving poor milk. 'How can I help it,' says the cow, 'with the usage I get?' 'Bad scram to you,' says Barnaby; 'sure the strength is in ye; and it's a compliment I pay you, you ignorant baste, to expect more from you, though you are fed on thraneens, than from any other cow that would be fed on clover!'" The thoughtless laughed at the simile, but the thoughtful shook their heads, and returned in silence and solitude to cottages which, if doomed to live under an absentee landlord, they might soon be despoiled of.

The agent was certainly an unfit person to have been placed over such a tenantry; he was full of new systems, and if they did not immediately work well, he became harsh and impatient. Paddy likes to go on in the old way; if his father had a dunghill at the door, it is a difficult matter to convince him that it could be more advantageously disposed of elsewhere; and he has a most provoking habit of saying, that whatever he does in the way of improvement, is done to "please" the landlord, or the "clergy," or any one but himself, though all the time it is for his own benefit those who have his interest at heart have persuaded him to change his plans. Then Paddy is so full of humour, real genuine humour, that he will lean his back against the door-post, between which and the wall a deed of separation, by mutual consent, has taken place; put one foot over the other, take his "dudeen" out of his mouth, fold his arms across his ample chest, and beguile you from the intention of giving him a good lecture both on the management and mismanagement of his farm, until you wish him good evening, enjoying the remembrance of the raciness and humour of his stories, and the mirthfulness that shakes his rags with laughter. It is not till after you sit down to your reading-table that you think how completely you were beguiled of your wisdom! An Irishman loves a jest, and likes to laugh—and Mr Crumbie, the agent, never laughed: he had a long business-like face—looking as an Englishman always does when he has been waiting three quarters of an hour beyond the usual time for his dinner. He had served three years in an attorney's office, and never regarded anything as binding that was not binding in law. It is to be hoped, for the sake of sweet charity, that he meant well; but certainly he acted ill. His wife was a rigid sectarian, believing, in her heart of hearts, that all who did not think exactly as she did must be in error. She made hard bargains, and gave low wages; in short, she was a very unfit person to preside over the people in the place of the "ould mistress." A spirit of discontent of the most alarming kind was abroad. Lord Killbally had managed, with a skill peculiarly Irish, to "spend half-a-crown out of sixpence a-day;" that is to say, he was deeply in

debt; he had overstepped his income, and wrote constantly to the agent to obtain fresh supplies, when, in fact, there were none to obtain. Matters had arrived at this crisis—the landlord driving the agent, and the agent the tenant—when my story commences. The widow and her daughter continued their conversation a little longer, and would have talked till evening, had not the sight of the postman, on his old grey pony, wending round the distant hill, and then entering the bohren that led to their cottage, sent both mother and daughter to meet him, in the hope of receiving a letter from the hope of the family, Mark Clement.

The expected letter was instantly produced, the postman took his departure, and Peggy, being what is called "a fine scholar," was able to peruse it for her mother's benefit. It was a curiosity in its way, remarkable for acute and affectionate feeling.

"DEAR MOTHER AND SISTER—My love goes with this paper, and my blessing, and all my prayers, which you're never out of, nor never will be—why should you?—Amin! It's long ago I'd have written again to you all, but indeed I haven't much heart to the pen, let alone the time, which bewilders me the way it flies, and no good of it. It's four years three quarters, my blessed mother, since I saw you; and often in the night, or rather the morning—for morning's night here—often do I think you are at my bedside; often do I hear yer voice in my dreams; and when I wake, it isn't your voice at all, but little Anty Maguire, the milk girl, calling "milk below" down the aircoos, when it's milk above she means; and very quare milk it is; but that's not Anty's fault, for it's ready watered before she gets it.

Well, the only real pleasure I have almost is, when Lady Ellen of a day she rides out with my lord, says, "Oh, Mark, when did you hear from your mother! and is Peggy quite well! and how is Grey-malkin!" ["Think of that!" interrupted the widow; "think of her remembering the hen!"] But, mother, Lady Ellen doesn't ride as often in the Park as she used, on account that the mare stumbled, and I know the mather didn't find it convenient to buy her another, though she lets on to her maid she's tired of the exercise. Ah, poor lady! that's not the only trouble she puts up with. Ye see, when first we came over, and had lashings o' money, and the mather, poor gentleman, thought, because his wife was young, he was young too, it was all very fine; and my Lady Killbally here, and my Lady Killbally there, and my Lady Ellen every where, and an acknowledged beauty, only even then, a taste of pulling to pieces on account of her brogue, or being Irish. ["Think of that!" exclaimed the widow, indignantly.] And offers she had, as I told you before; but the money stood in the way, or rather it was out of the way, for it wasn't in it, on account that the property is entailed on the heir-male, master's nephew, and poor Lady Ellen will have hardly any thing, barring master's blessing, and that she earns hard enough, for of late he bates Banagher with the crossness; and small blame to him, poor gentleman, to see the way he's looked down upon, now that it's known he's only an Irish peer in embarrassment, which means debt and danger. There's no decent Irish property could stand up to cut a figure here. With the Irish it's all going out, and too proud to do any thing to bring in; but with the English, why, if they give out with one hand, they grapple in with the other; very few, indeed, to say above their business, only work all, work all, and tradesmen worth tens o' thousands. I can't but think it's the best plan, which you want, I know, only you don't know any thing of the hardship of wanting to appear grand and show off when you're nothing to do it with—like the girl we remember who turned her cotton, to make the neighbours believe she'd two gowns, when she was trusting to one. Well, that's the way we've been many a long day, making the one thing appear two, and my mistress without a head, or what's worse in a woman, without a heart; and, och murder intirely! to hear the sneers and the slurs that's put upon them—tradesmen's bills unpaid, and bills having been passed to them overdue, and then money borrowed by the lawyers to the tune of fifty per cent. ["What tune's that?" inquired the widow. "Roguary, I daresay," answered Peggy; "isn't the lawyer in it?" per cent.; and then a flash in the pan that whirls away the cash, and the mistress so sows while it lasts; and that's the time to ask a favour from the mather, for he never thinks of tomorrow, and the creditors then give a little more credit, and my lady pays half for the opera box, ["What's that, a-lanman?" inquired the widow again. "Oh," said Peggy, who liked to appear wise, "it's a snuff-box, I dare say, though she's rather young to take to it."] and gets the carriage new painted, and four horses on job. ["Och, my bither trouble!" exclaimed Mrs. Clement, bursting into tears, "to think of the ould ancient family of the Killballys bein' drawn by job horses, and the agent's horses and coulters thrumping down all the young trees in his lordship's

plantation!" And we're as gay as servants can be that don't get their wages. ["That's mean of Mark," said Peggy; "sure he ought to be proud to serve the family without wages—that's part of his English breeding." And all this is talked over in the servants' hall, for they've no respect for the family, and no feel at all for the mather or mistress, nor even Lady Ellen. ["They are no better than heathens," interrupted the widow; "and if I was Mark, I'd manage to let the mather know what vipers he has about him." "Why couldn't he stay in his own country, where he was honoured and respected, and in those times had the ball at his foot?" replied the angry Peggy, and then resumed the perusal of the letter.] The gentleman that'll have the estate, by all accounts won't value it a thraneen, because he doesn't want it, but has full and plenty in the Western Indies, or some other part, I hardly know where, but somewhere it is—lashings of money, and to spare; so, in coorse, he'll not have a heart to the sod no more than others. ["God help us!" exclaimed Peggy, changing colour a little, and letting the open letter rest upon her knees, "this is a poor look-out for here and hereafter!"

"It must only tache us to look up the more," said the widow, raising her eyes. "God help us!—we're a nation of castaways!"

"We are not!" exclaimed Peggy, and her eye kindled. "We are not, mother; and it's our thinking ourselves so, and putting up with the usage we get, that makes us be looked down upon."

"No, Peggy darlint, that's not it," replied her mother. "We've a dale of heart and spirit; but, as I heard a gentleman say once, we want the wisdom; and that's the cruel want at this time o' day, when the world's going mad about it. Poor Paddy's head gets hard enough with blows, but not with wisdom. Go on with the letter, dear."

"There's not much more in it, mother, and what there is, isn't much good." "Indeed, don't be surprised if there's a change for the worse before long. I'm sure the mather will be forced to rack-rent every perch that isn't rack-rented already, and then maybe sell the green acres that war so long the pride and glory of the family. I can't think what comes over the gentry; I'm sure, in Ireland, a pound goes as far as three here, and the same body there, is a no body here—so that either in regard of the sving, or the grandeur, "ould Ireland for ever!"

"The country's war on his heart still," said the widow, wiping her eyes; "it isn't out of sight out of mind. Is there much more on the letter?"

"Not much," answered Peggy, blushing; "only a few words to Paul Kinsala, which I trust he doesn't need. Mother, did ye ever doubt that Paul had a laning to any wild ways?"

"Wild ways, a-lanman! Sure I never see even the corner of his eye turned on any girl except myself."

"It's not in regard of the girls!" exclaimed the rustic beauty, tossing her head with as much pride as if she had been bred at St. James'. "It's not that—I don't thank him for constancy—he can't help that, mother, so no thanks to him; but in respect of the doings they say some are at—the swearing-in, and things of the kind. Any wildness that way, mother?"

"No, darlint, not exactly. I can't say I ever did. I hope he has better sense; he has seen enough of examples to keep him from that, I hope. No good ever came yet from such doings. Even suppose one man is got out of the country that has behaved badly to the poor, sure another will be put in worse; and if we drive the gentry away, they take their money with them. The law has a kinder eye on the poor now than it ever had before, and it's by showing obedience to the law, particular when it's in a good humour, that we prove to the world that we deserve the protection we receive, and not the bad name we've got in England; we have enough to bear in the way of poverty still; but, please God, times will mend. What do such disturbances lead to but shame? Wasn't one of those who war forced to fly from the other side the country on account of—you know what—at hide-and-seek through the rocks and bushes of Knockatrim for as good as three months, and his wife forced to beg? and wasn't he at last forced to die without benefit of clergy down in the Black Cave of the fever, and nothing handed him except on the end of a stick? and I remember him once, bright as the sun—But here is Paul Kinsala, Peggy, coming over the hedge. Ah, girl machree! you saw him before I did, and I might as well have talked to Grey-malkin as to you, for you never heeded me. There, your hair's as smooth and shining as satin." And as the old woman advanced to meet her intended son-in-law, she laid her hand on her daughter's head, and signing the sign of the cross on her brow, kissed it affectionately.

When Paul entered, his brow was darkened, and there was an unnatural expression about his face which startled both mother and daughter; he hardly waited to return the warm salutation, met in every peasant's cottage, of "God save ye," with the meet reply of "God save ye kindly," but inquired "if they had had a letter from Mark?" Peggy replied in the affirmative, and placed it in his hands. After he had read it, he folded it up with great deliberation, saying, "There is nothing in this half so bad as what we know already."

"And what is it you know, Paul avic?" said Widow Clement, laying her hand upon his arm, while Peggy, unable to speak, gazed earnestly and tenderly in his face.

"What is it I know?" he repeated; "I know this, that there's to be levying of fines, and every species of wickedness; every lease that can be broke will be broke; and the agent himself this blessed holy Thursday stood before me—me, Paul Kinsala—and told me, there was no good in my promise—that I must quit—the land—quit the house my father and myself war born in—for—that the place was let to a better tenant than I could be, who had money and stock. What do you think of that?" he said, fixing his eyes on the widow, for he could not tell

such tidings, and gaze on the face of her he so dearly loved. "What do you think of that? Now, the truth is, that the farm wants no stocking; the crops are in; he said I should be allowed for them—allowed for the grain my own two hands sowed, with a prayer to the Almighty that we—that Peggy and I—might reap it together. Money! he said I had no money to give for the premises on a new lease, or to carry on the farming. And what did I say?—that I had not, because every penny, every farthing, had been spent on that land. He has the law on his side—and I who never let a gale run on to another, but paid—like an English tenant—I am to starve!"

The young man covered his face with his hands to conceal his emotion; how long he might have endeavoured to do so, it is impossible to say, for his attention was roused by a cry from the widow—the light-hearted, and generally speaking, strong-headed Peggy, had fainted.

When she recovered, there was a great deal too much feeling excited to admit of many words; the poor girl laid her head on her lover's shoulder, and wept bitterly; the widow stood at the other side, and with more affection than worldly prudence, said, "My dear Paul, never heed it. I'll tell you what: we have a snug house here, and as good as two acres of land, and a bigger penny saved than you might think of, for I had no mind to let my daughter be beholden to you all out, and laid by what I could. So I'll tell you what, Paul: I'll spake myself to the priest, and get the words said" as soon as may be; and then, instead of Peggy's going home to you, avic, why, you'll come home to us. Where's the great differ, Paul? Don't I know the girl's heart is in ye? It's no time to be denying it now, when ye're in trouble; and sure ye're the same as my own son this many a day. Maybe it's a showing of God's mercy after all. I'm not as light either on the foot or in the heart as I used to be, and would be lonely many a time if she was away; but now I'll have a son, instead of losing a daughter; and Mark has my lord's ear; and if that wouldn't do, I'm not too ould to go to London myself, and get spaking to him; and, sure, with my two birds in my cage, though it is but a dawsky one," sobbed the kind woman, looking round cheerfully through her tears, "I'll be a proud and a happy woman, and no need to hire a labourer now, or be beholden to the neighbours, who never let a lone woman hire, if they can help her. Sure you'll do a hand's turn for Peggy's mother for sake's sake. Or," she continued, after a pause, with a generosity that would have done honour to a heroine, "or, if it would be more agreeable to you, Paul, I'd settle the bit of land and the place on the both of you, for it was given me by the lord for myself, to do what I pleased with, at a pepper-corn rent. And that would ease the proud spirit that you ever had, Paul darlint; and small blame to you, for your people war far above us, and yet you never looked down on us, nor on her."

"Look down on you—on her!" he exclaimed, pressing his betrothed to his bosom; "who ever looked down on Peggy Clement? But no, mother, no; by all that's holy, I'll be revenged—I'll be revenged—justice I'll have. If I can't have it by law, I'll have it—see that, now!" he continued; and for a moment forgetting the presence of the two women he loved best on earth, he stamped his foot violently on the ground, and suddenly dropping on his knees, threw his arms upwards, and clenching his hands, swore a deep and bitter oath, that unless his farm was given back, he would "water the earth with the blood of agent or landlord." This was very frightful; and while the widow and her daughter looked on him, they clung together, unable to restrain his words, yet trembling at their import.

"I didn't deserve this from you," said the gentle old woman, weeping; "I thought to turn the trouble from you, and you have turned bleak bitterness on me."

"No, mother—no, Peggy!" he exclaimed, the warm and affectionate current of Irish feeling rushing back to his heart, now that he had given words to his fury; "no, no, you'll be proud of me yet; I'll do no meanness, nothing to call a colour to your cheek; nothing—though I'm not to be trod like a worm in the dust.—No money to pay for a new lease! I might have had full and plenty to spend for a new lease, if it had not been that I spent it on the land—and now for it to be taken from me! I'm not the only one in the place that cries shame; not the only one that will have revenge. Go through the town land, into the village, along the high roads, and ye'll hear the same thing from every lip; ye'll see the same purpose in every eye. Didn't Macmurray himself say—"

"Don't name Macmurray," interrupted Peggy, speaking for the first time; "he's bad, egg and bird, and no fit companion for you at all at all, Paul; his character's blasted this many a day, and he always had a spite to the family: have nothing to do with him; for God-sake have nothing to do with him. Keep yerself to yerself, Paul; no harm can ever come of that."

"She speaks the truth, avic," added the old woman; "take patience, and it will come round, it will all come round; ye're of a good stock, Paul, with fine health, praise be to God, and a good character; and with that, no need of fear for any boy of five-and-twenty; think of what I said, Paul."

"God bless you, dear mother; it is not because I'm not down on my knees to thank you, and bless you, that I don't feel your goodness. And come had o'good, in the presence of the Almighty I swear there's no girl on the face of the green earth will ever have my heart but Peggy Clement; though, as things are—I mean from what I know, I—I—can have no claim on yer promise, Peggy—I—"

He could not finish his sentence, and Peggy looked upon her lover in stupefied astonishment. It never occurred to her, indeed it very seldom occurs to Irish women of her class, that poverty should offer any barrier to an union. And the poor girl's feelings were torn by the love-beatings of her own heart, and the dread that Paul's "heart" was changed towards her. What was the cause of this sudden declaration, neither mother nor daughter

* Got married.

had time to inquire; for suddenly he invoked a blessing on the widow, and, kissing the maiden's lips, burst from the cottage. When he was gone, strange as his conduct appeared, no word of reproach escaped his friends. Peggy, after a genuine flood of tears, communed with her mother for a long time.

Nothing could exceed the agitation of the neighbourhood. Wild rumours were afloat; positive injustice had been already done to more than to Paul Kinsala; and the fine old trees, trees that had been the pride and glory of the neighbourhood for years, were doomed to the woodman's axe; in truth, the beautiful valley of Killbally, that during the landlord's residence had been gemmed with cottages and adorned by happy smiling faces, might now be called a valley of tears. Great as the change had been, it needed this to complete it; and the sighs and moans of, in this instance, a decidedly ill-used peasantry, mingled with the free air and bright sunshine that poured upon the landscape! The bitterest curses were heaped upon the agent's head, who, notwithstanding his desperate injustice to Paul, had not exceeded the instructions he received from the landlord abroad, whose difficulties had dictated the heartless order—that he was to rack and drive, and get money by humane means if he could, but get it by any means sooner than not get it. His very nature seemed changed by his necessities; there was an evident movement in the country to resist this oppression, and plenty of persons (who, having forfeited their own claim on society, and become lawless) were sufficiently anxious to induce others to follow their example, and spread the spirit of discontent far and wide. Peggy Clement, with the assistance of the village schoolmaster, indited a letter not only to her brother, but to Lady Ellen, stating the rights of the case, and pleading, if not elegantly, eloquently, for her lover, and indeed for all those who had been honest, faithful, and true in their callings. These letters were, to the schoolmaster's astonishment and her own, not only written but dispatched that very day; while the widow was "questing" through the neighbourhood picking up every bit of news, not from a love of idle gossip, but from the deepest anxiety to discover if the machinations of others, or his own impetuosity, were likely to lead Paul into serious mischief. The Widow Clement, though not young, was both clear and quick-sighted. She knew that if Paul was led to do any thing rash, his life would pay the forfeit, for he was too fearless and too frank to have a villain's caution; and, moreover, she knew that the happiness, the existence of her child, hung upon him. These were strong incentives to the curiosity and the caution of a woman and a mother, and a strong feeling of respect for the family mingled with her sympathy for the distressed and ruined tenants, who were breathing vengeance at every whisky-house in the neighbourhood; for mischief is never undertaken in Ireland without its having been first planned over the burning fluid, which stimulates them to the destruction of themselves and others.

"There's enough work now for day labourers, any way," said Larry Toole to Andy Smith.

"And what will they get for it? Eightpence a-day, and the neggar that offers it saying, 'that if the neighbours don't take it, he'll get plenty of the mountaineers that will.' Think of that!—bringing starving strangers down upon us, whose boast it used to be, to keep our own poor from begging! Let them come and take what they get—that's all! I'll never work in it for eightpence a-day! We never were offered less than tinnence before! However, let 'em go on their own way; there's one comfort, it won't last for ever."

"Sure, the agent says the common's my lord's, and that no cattle, not even a pig, is to go on it now without payment, and the marsh beyond it too—think of that! And the turf we had for cutting off the bog is to be paid for! I wonder does the lord know that?"

"There is a Lord knows it!" answered Andy again, who had always been discontented; "but, never heed; it won't be always so, I'll go bail."

Many such hints did the widow hear, but she and her daughter had been unable that evening to determine what course to pursue as regarded Paul Kinsala. That night passed, the next day, and the next. The spirit of discontent increased more and more. Some said Paul had refused to yield possession; others, that he had gone to London to appeal against the agent's decision. The first, may even the second day, Peggy had borne herself bravely. She had re-strung her nerves, and waited the result with many and many an earnest and deeply breathed prayer to those in whom she trusted, that she might be spared more suffering, or taught to bear it. Her wheel, or knitting needles, pursued their wonted motions, and she moved about the house as usual, save that a restless gaze was ever directed to the door or window.

The agent had been pelted and hooted through the village, and had thought it wise to station a police force in the castle that had once been guarded by the hearts of an affectionate people. There were other disturbances; more than one act of wild excess committed, at once absurd and unjustifiable; and Peggy's cheek grew pale, and her step feeble, in the course of one little week.

"I shall die, mother, and soon," said the poor girl; "there's a wakeness about my heart, and a mist, like the film of a winding-sheet, over my eyes, that means no good. If Paul wasn't after something bad, he'd have been here before this, and after all you said to him. But may be so best. I had two hopes in the world, mother—you—my hope for you was, that I might be a blessing—and a comfort to you hereafter; and when the Lord thought fit that I might close yer eyes—my hope in him!—But it's all gone, it's all gone, like the bloom of that thorn-tree which the last wind shook to the earth." The widow did not overwhelm her beloved child with consolation. She said few words, but she said them wisely, and endeavoured, by every simple means in her power, to vary her employments. She knew that though she might suffer greatly, she had really a strong and active mind, and that those who have such seldom die, as it is called, for love.

The Widow Clement felt all this; yet, while her trust

in the Almighty schooled her to patience and obedience, it did not cramp her exertions; and, with a firm resolve to find out if things were as bad as she suspected, and how Paul was engaged, she contrived some new occupation for her daughter, and set off, determined to fathom the troubled waters; and be it remembered, it was the troubled waters of a disturbed Irish district this solitary unprotected woman resolved to fathom. She left the cottage soon after daybreak, and about one o'clock, Peggy, whose eyes, despite her employment, were seldom off the undulating line that showed how the road wound round the mountain, perceived the approach of the letter-carrier. She flew to meet him.

"It's bad for the town land," he said, "when even you, Miss Peggy, have a serious face. There's nothing else going now; the boys at the castle have turned out for higher wages in regard of the trees they're felling, and the place is so shut up, that they won't let me pass the lodge, though I have English letters. They say there's a dispatch gone off for more police. God help us if that's true, for they're ripe for a ruction through the whole town land. Some say the agent's not in the house, some say he is, some say the property's sold; but, God be with ye, Peggen gra, ye're not minding a word I'm saying," and the old man retraced his path.

No painting could convey an idea of the rapid changes of colour and expression that passed over the cheeks and brow of Peggy Clement as she stood at her cottage door, the sunlight resting on her hair, which fell in heavy masses on her neck and bosom. She held the letter before her with both hands; her bosom heaved convulsively; and though her very arms trembled, still she grasped the paper so tightly that there was no danger of its falling. Her very soul seemed drinking in the contents; but whether the draught was of joy or sorrow, it would have been impossible to tell. She gasped for breath, pressed her hands upon her bosom, turned to the cottage, and twice ejaculated "mother!" Then, remembering that her mother was not there, that she had no one near to whom she could disclose her emotions, she dropped upon her knees, and, throwing her head back, as if she wished her grateful thoughts and feelings to wing their way to heaven, she uttered a few broken exclamations of joy and gratitude; then, hastily throwing on her cloak, and drawing the hood forward so as to conceal her agitation, she followed in the path pursued by the old postman. At first my heroine walked with great rapidity, but then she suddenly paused, and said within herself, "But I'm not to tell it, except to my mother and Paul. Mother will be part sorry—and Paul!—where shall I find Paul?—but, any way, I'll find her." She had not proceeded very far, when she saw her mother coming towards her, and before she could communicate her news, the old woman burst into tears. A few words can express their cause: she had received information—how, it does not matter—that the agent had left the castle; that, finding the country so outrageously disturbed, he had taken refuge, as secretly as he could, at the house of a neighbouring gentleman, resolving to proceed to Dublin that night; that he believed his intention was unknown, perfectly unknown, but that it had transpired; and that several persons had determined he should never reach his destination. The widow had every reason to believe that Paul Kinsala was of the number. To give the doomed man information of what was intended, would have been to draw down the vengeance of the party upon their own heads. Much as Peggy had suffered, she saw not only the wickedness but the impolicy of the fearful crime they meditated. The best and bravest sulk beneath small trials, and many great minds are incapable of small sacrifices; but present an object of sufficient magnitude before them, and their courage and fidelity stand forth boldly and at once to encounter and overcome. So it was with this simple peasant girl. She told her mother what she intended. The old woman would have accompanied her, but time pressed. She was already worn out with walking and anxiety, and no third person could share their confidence. But she looked on her daughter; and the bright flashing of her eye, the proud and determined carriage, that, as it were, bespoke, while it enshrined, her purpose, assured the mother that her daughter was determined. As long as she was by her, she felt assured of her success; when, however, she was out of sight, her spirits sank, and she could only weep and pray, sitting on the hill-side, from whence she still saw Peggy's receding figure. The day was on the wane, and yet she felt as if the sun would never set. Then again she fancied he set too quickly. The crescent moon hung its silver bow in the clouds before the fading away of daylight. The widow could not return to her cottage; she fancied she should see her child sooner where she was; she would not, could not stir. At last she took out her beads; one by one the silent tellers of her devotion dropped from her fingers, while her lips mechanically repeated her prayers. Still Peggy came not. The firmament was glittering with those jewels of immortality—types, beautiful and mysterious, of him who is the same "to-day, yesterday, and for ever." Still her daughter came not; there was no bell to tell the passing world of passing hours, but hill and valley, mountain and river, were dark beneath the sky; the grasshopper had folded his wings under the shamrock, and heaven's own minstrel nestled with her young in the deep corn furrow; the van-guard of the rooks had swept towards the woods of Killbally, where they were soon to be despoiled of their homes—their last caw! caw! had sounded in the widow's ear. She was sorry they were all past—crows are good company on a mountain's brow. The shrill whistle of the curlew suddenly darted like an arrow through the air. She started to her feet, as if it had been the warning whistle of a Whiteboy, and the humming beetle, who had rested on her cloak, whizzed away, wondering why the mountain moved. Presently, as she looked around (for still her daughter came not), she saw a large bird flying heavily, heavily, between her and the now risen moon, upon which she had unconsciously fixed her eyes. It came nearer—then turned and hooted—again and again. Widow Clement was a strong-nerved woman,

yet the hoot of that wild owl sent the blood curdling to her heart. She could support the silence no longer; the solitude became frightful to her. But it was no longer solitude; it was peopled by her fancies. She walked with rapid strides, not towards her own home, but along the path her daughter had pursued.

The destination of Peggy Clement was a hut about three miles from where she had met her mother. It was ruined and desolate, save when peopled by those who wished concealment. It could not be distinguished from the high road along which Mr Crumie was to pass, and still it was close to it. My tale is already too long; I must hasten its conclusion. Her hand, girl though she was, did not tremble when she knocked at the door, that was fastened on the inside; nor, when she had done so, was there the least noise or reply. The inmates were evidently on their guard against intrusion. Again she knocked. No answer. At last she knelt down by the door, and, placing her mouth to the latch-hole, she said, "Paul Kinsala, Peggy Clement is here, and will stay here until the time comes when, for a reason you have, you will all have it." There was a murmur within—a whispering; the door was silently unfastened; a hand, whose touch sent the blood thrilling from her arm through her whole frame, led her in, where, all, except the light of her own brave virtuous spirit, was dark; and a voice she would have given worlds to hear any where but there, whispered, "You are mad!"

"You are all mad!" she said aloud, and the tones of her clear fearless voice made music in the darkness. "Strike a light, see me, and hear what I have to tell you! Strike a light—a gun-flint will do it, and ye're not wanting that." She was obeyed, but the light emitted from the small candle was hardly enough to render visible the countenances of five men, who peered at her where she stood, close to Paul Kinsala, who trembled by her side as if he were the aspen, she the oak. "I don't ask ye why ye are here—I know why; but I will tell ye why I came. Ye want vengeance on the agent! Boys, boys, it's a poor vengeance that returns evil, as it would here, five-fold on yourselves; for, sooner or later, such is found out. I thought to have been here before, though there's plenty of time; and, boys, what d'ye think, I've brought ye—VENGEANCE!" There was a movement in the hovel; and Paul, who had shrunk from her side, from that feeling which prevents a high mind from coming in contact with a high mind, when it knows it has been guilty of an unworthy action, advanced again.

"Indeed it's thruth I'm telling; and I hope ye'll remember me in yer prayers, for, by God's mercy, I'll keep the stain of blood from yer souls this night. Listen to me, thin, and here's my credentials." She took from her bosom the letter she had received from the postman.

"Here's news—the old lord's dead!"

Various ejaculations followed this announcement. "The letter is from my brother Mark. The old lord is dead of a sudden; and when he was still in it, before the breath was out of his body, he gave his consent to the heir's marriage with Lady Ellen. Ye all know how rich the heir was, and how my lord couldn't abide the name of him in the house. But, somehow, under some false name, he knew Lady Ellen, and won her heart; and the last thing my lord did was to give them his blessing. And Lady Ellen wouldn't hear to the love, Mark says, until the heir promised to redeem Killbally from debt and agents, and reside six months of the year at the old castle!"

When Peggy entered, not one of the party could have been called sober; all were more or less intoxicated, and all were labouring under unnatural excitement. This unexpected announcement sobered them, and a shout of triumph burst from four of the number. The fifth would have preferred murder to gold or prosperity; so he waited with the cold-blooded determination of a villain to hear what would follow.

"Where's the proof of this?" he inquired.

"Here," said Peggy, triumphantly showing the letter. "And more—my lord acknowledged the promise of a new lease to you, Paul, and the heir promised it—promised it before Mark." It was only in saying this that her voice faltered.

"And because you get a new lease, I suppose we all may go to the devil," retorted Shawn Glyne; "but if ye forget yer oaths, boys, I don't forget mine. I swore I'd have the heart's blood of Crumie, and I will; before all the holy saints of heaven, and by this blessed book, I will!" He sank on his knees, and kissed a small prayer-book which he drew from his vest. Nothing could be more picturesque than the appearance of the interior of the hut at that moment; the light of the candle fell full upon Shawn's face, darkened and distorted by every bad and violent passion, and the erect form and bright animated countenance of Peggy Clement was also distinctly visible. As she stood a little in advance of her lover, every other object seemed clouded and misty; but these two, so different, yet so expressive of their several characters, were finely contrasted; the one so like an angel, in all the pure and holy semblance of good and firm intent, the other composed of great and powerful elements, yet blighted by sin—converted from a man into a demon.

The party were perplexed by the determination of their comrade; they hated the agent with a bitter hatred; but Peggy's clear statement of what had occurred, convinced them at once that they would have justice, without taking the law into their own hands; thus their personal safety was secured, and their purpose effected. But Shawn had already passed the pale, and his hatred to the agent was mingled with a fiendish desire to see others steeped in crime as deeply as himself.

"You hear him, Paul," said Peggy, and her voice sounded sweetly, as a voice from heaven. "You hear him—what do you say?"

"I swore I'd have justice," replied the young man, "and I saw but one way. The Lord, in his mercy, has seen another, and it won't be the first time I've had reason to bless your step and your voice. You have saved me from destruction."

Shawn advanced towards him while he spoke, but

Peggy stood between them. "Thank God!" she exclaimed. "Thank God, Paul, I've heard yer words; I've blest ye for them. My heart's lighter, for I knew yours could never be rightly in it. I'm satisfied of that. I see, Shawn—I see that ye're determined to have the agent's life; and there are others whose minds are not made up. But your opportunity is past." Again there was a movement amongst the men, more decided than before. They pressed towards the girl, as if uncertain what she had done, or what they must do; her lover would have drawn her towards him, but she stood firm.

"Your opportunity is past, I say. I told the agent he would be murdered if he quitted where he is. I sent to hasten the soldiers that now, ay, at this minute, protect the house. No one suspects ye—that will tell. And, bless God, every one of ye—if ye don't now, ye will, and on yer bended knees—that the little wisdom of a simple girl saved ye from a crime that would have brought disgrace on yer country, and sin to yer souls for ever!"

POPULAR INFORMATION ON SCIENCE.

ON THE ELECTRICITY OF ANIMALS; ESPECIALLY THAT CALLED ANIMAL ELECTRICITY.

SECOND ARTICLE.

WE now proceed to the *gymnotus*, which, different from the torpedo, was not known till modern times. It is often described as a disagreeable-looking animal, resembling a bulky eel; but Humboldt's plate represents it as a beautiful-looking fish, of a fine olive-green colour above, paler beneath, and spotted with numerous red and yellow markings along the back. We suspect there are different species, though this has not been established. Humboldt was informed that a black variety, which he did not see, gives the strongest shocks, whilst Bloch says this peculiarity belongs to those of a reddish hue. Bajan states the colour to be slatey black. Its average size is from three to four feet; frequently it extends to six and seven; and it is often stated, on respectable authority, such as that of Bancroft, Garden, and Pennant, that it attains the length of from ten to twenty feet, which Humboldt, however, says is going too far. The *gymnote* was first made known to philosophers about the year 1671, when its wonderful powers were announced to the French Academy by M. Richer. His statements, however, were received with much scepticism; and it was not till towards the middle of the last century that a general belief in its existence was entertained. At that time, the observations of Condamine and others became known, to which those of Fermin and Bancroft succeeded, and speedily it was more particularly described by Drs Williamson and Garden. According to this latter gentleman, the animal has the power of lengthening and shortening its body, somewhat like a worm, and is also capable of swimming backwards and forwards with equal ease, when the undulations of the body begin respectively at the tail or head.* It would appear that this eel is an inhabitant exclusively of South America. Humboldt found it in the Calvado "in innumerable quantities."

Mr Hunter was the first individual who gave a detailed description of the electric apparatus of this fish, as of the torpedo; and the difference between them is great. These organs in the *gymnote* occupy nearly one-third (Humboldt says, four-fifths) of the animal's entire bulk, being the posterior part. They are formed of two series of tendinous membranes, running from the posterior part of the cavity of the belly to the tail, one part of which consists of horizontal plates placed very near each other, and the other of perpendicular plates, near the lower part of the animal. The whole of this structure is divided into two pairs of distinct organs, of very different sizes, the largest being uppermost. They are covered only by the common integuments. In the *gymnote* dissected by Mr Hunter, which was 2 feet 4 inches long, the large organ of one side was about 1½ inch in breadth at its thickest part, and in this space there were 34 longitudinal divisions. The smaller organ was about half an inch in breadth, and contained 14 septa or partitions. The perpendicular membranes are placed much more closely together than those of the upper series, Mr Hunter counting 240 in an inch, filled with a glary transparent substance. Lacépède calculated that the discharging surface of these organs in a fish four feet long, is at least 123 square feet in extent; while in the torpedo, the ordinary size is only about 58 feet square. The nerves in the electric organs of the *gymnotus* are very large and numerous, and are spread in very fine twigs over the cells of the organs. Dr Knox counted 15 nervous branches distributed on each inch of the structure, each nerve being for the most part subdivided into as many branches as there are longitudinal septa.†

The *gymnotus* inflicts far more astounding shocks than the torpedo. According to Bancroft, the strokes of the large ones are instantly fatal. When one of average dimensions is touched with one hand, a smart shock is generally felt in the hand and fore-arm; and when both are applied, it affects the whole frame, striking to the very heart. The discharges of the larger fish are sometimes sufficient to deprive men, while bathing, of sense and motion, and mules are often destroyed in attempting to ford those rivers where the *gymnote* abounds. This so frequently happens in some districts of South America, that in the neighbourhood of Urituca, a route at one time much frequented was entirely abandoned in consequence of the great loss of mules. Humboldt mentions, that having placed his feet upon a *gymnotus*, he experienced a more dreadful shock than

he ever received from a Leyden jar, and that he felt severe pain in his knees and in other parts of his body, which continued for several hours. According to Bryant, a discharge sometimes occasions such strong cramps of the muscles which grasp the fish, that they cannot let it go; and the shock being repeated, painful sensations are experienced throughout the body, and headache, with pain in the limbs, remain for some time; and Dr Flagg states, that paralytic affections, as well as giddiness, are said occasionally to follow the reception of strong shocks.*

The effects of the discharge of the *gymnote* cannot be better illustrated than by referring to the masterly description which Humboldt has given of the capture of the animal, as practised near the town of Calabozo. The Indians are well aware of the danger of encountering them while their powers are unexhausted. They therefore collect twenty or thirty wild horses, force them into the pools, and when the fish have exhausted their batteries, lay hold of them without difficulty. The horses at first exhibit much agitation and terror, but they are prevented from leaving the water by an enclosed band of Indians, who goad them with bamboos when they attempt to escape. "The eels," says Humboldt, "stunned and confused by the noise of the horses, defended themselves by reiterated discharges of their electric batteries. For some time they seemed likely to gain the victory over the horses and mules: these in every direction, stunned by the frequency and force of the shocks, disappeared under water. Some horses, however, rose again, and, in spite of the active vigilance of the Indians, gained the shore, overcome with fatigue; and their limbs being exhausted with the explosions, they stretched themselves upon the ground. I remember," says he, "a superb picture of a horse entering a cavern, and terrified at the sight of a lion. The expression is not there stronger than what we witnessed in this unequal conflict. In less than five minutes two horses were drowned. The eel, more than five feet long, glides under the belly of the horse or mule; it then gives a discharge from the whole extent of its electric organs, which directly affects the heart and other vital parts. After this commencement, I was afraid that the sport might end tragically, but the Indians assured us that the fishing would soon be finished, and that nothing is to be dreaded but the first assault of the *gymnotus*. In fact, whether the galvanic electricity is accumulated in repose, or the organ ceases to perform its function when fatigued by too long-continued use, the eels, after a time, resemble discharged batteries. Their muscular movements are still equally active, but they no longer have the power of giving energetic shocks. When the combat had lasted a quarter of an hour, the mules and horses appeared less affrighted; they no longer bristled up the mane, and the eye was less expressive of suffering and terror. They no longer were seen to fall backwards; and the *gymnoti*, swimming with the body half out of the water, and now flying from the horses instead of pursuing, began themselves, in their turn, to approach to the shore almost lifeless; and they were then easily captured by means of small harpoons attached to long cords." The fishes left in the pool thus disturbed were found scarcely able to give even weak shocks at the end of two days. Humboldt concluded from what he saw and heard, that the horses which are lost in the course of this singular fishery are not directly killed, but merely stunned by the power of the shock; their death being occasioned by the subsequent submersion.

The remaining electrical fishes, not having been examined with the same care as the preceding, will not occupy us long. The first we name is the *Silurus* of the Nile and Senegal, the Roach or lightning of the Arabs (*Silurus electricus*, Linn; the *Malapterurus* of Lacépède), which has been partially known for many years. It is associated with a group, some of which are considered as the largest and most sluggish of river fish. The usual length of the electric species is scarcely two feet. Its head and fore parts are very broad and depressed. Its electric organs present us with an entirely new arrangement of parts. The apparatus consists of a thick layer of dense cellular membrane, which completely surrounds the body, immediately under the integuments. So compact is this tissue, that at first sight it might be mistaken for a deposit of fatty matter; but under the microscope, it is found to be composed of tendinous fibres, closely interwoven, the meshes of which are filled with jelly-like matter. This apparatus is divided into two circular layers by a strong membrane, the outer lying immediately under the true skin, the inner being placed upon the flesh itself. Both of these parts are isolated from the surrounding tissues by a dense membrane, except where the nerves and blood-vessels enter. The cells of the outer organ are so minute that they require a lens in order to be distinctly perceived: the inner organ is also cellular, and appears somewhat flaky: both are most abundantly supplied with nerves. The *Trichurus*, the fourth kind of fish we have named, is an inhabitant of the Indian seas: its colour is a pale brown, variegated with spots of a deeper hue. And, finally, we close this enumeration by alluding to the *Tetraodon*, a member of the extraordinary *Short-Sun-fish* group of British authors. It was among the coral rocks of Johanna, one of the Comoros, in the Indian Sea, that Lieutenant Paterson discovered this fish. His specimen was seven inches long, and two and a half broad. The colour of its back was brown, of its belly sea-green,

of its sides yellow; its body was covered with red, green, and white spots; the eyes were large. Lieutenant Paterson caught two of them in a linen bag, the water being about 60 degrees Fahrenheit, and he had no sooner taken one of them in his hand, than he received so severe a shock that he was obliged to let it go. He carried the two fishes to the camp, and obtained the evidence of the surgeon and adjutant in favour of his discovery: the former, having held it between his hands, received a distinct shock, and the latter received a shock by merely touching the fish on its back with his finger.

In taking a general review of these interesting organs, we are struck with the existence of a certain degree of analogy amongst them, and yet we fail to discover such resemblances as might be expected, and such as exist between the structure of other organs performing the same functions in different animals. Here we have tendinous membranes variously arranged, and all so as to form a series of separate cells filled with a jelly-like matter. Yet how great is the difference between the great columnar cells of the Torpedo, and the minute cells of the Silure! All, however, are equally supplied with nerves of very great size, larger than any others of the same animals, and larger, indeed, than any nerve in any other animal of like bulk.

We have already stated that several of these fishes have in recent times been made the subjects of careful scientific investigation, and we shall proceed, in a succeeding paper, to take a closer view of their habits, and more especially of that wonderful property with which they are in common endowed.

"THE LONDON AND BIRMINGHAM RAILWAY."

A VOLUME of very elegant appearance, both as respects typography and pictorial embellishments, with the above title, and of which the letterpress is composed by Thomas Roscoe, Esq. has just made its appearance.* The railway from London to Birmingham is now the greatest public work in Britain, and promises to be the most successful, as well as the most generally useful. Such a magnificent work of art fully deserves a volume such as that before us, and such a historian as Mr Roscoe, who possesses not only a fine perception of the beauties of nature, but of what is excellent and available in art. Resembling the more elegant of the *Annals*, his book is worth a thousand of these flimsy productions. Referring to the work itself for an account of the line of railway, and the country through which it passes, we can spare room for only the following sketch of Birmingham, which is daily growing in importance as a centre of an extensive series of thoroughfares:—

"Birmingham is properly esteemed, if the extent and variety of its products be considered, one of the most important manufacturing towns in the British empire. In the early accounts of this place, the etymology of its name has been followed through no less than a hundred and forty variations, ranging from Bromwicham to Bermyngham, which, from their complicity and number, have puzzled the mind and stimulated the invention of many a learned antiquary, who has sought in the productions of the soil, or in some local or neighbouring circumstances, for a satisfactory explanation. The probable fact is, however, that it took its title from the lord of the manor, one Peter de Birmingham, who, in the year 1154, as the historian of the county writes, 'had a castle here, and lived in great splendour.'

Birmingham is advantageously situated on the side of a hill, or rather a series of hills. It is nearly in the centre of the kingdom, and, during the Saxon heptarchy, was included in that portion of it which was under the sway of the Mercian kings. It is now, however, in the county of Warwick, and the hundred of Hemlingford, and is bordered by the neighbouring counties of Stafford and Worcester. It is 110 miles north-west from London, by way of Coventry, 116 by Oxford, and 112½ by the railway. The superficial contents of the parish are 2864 acres, and its inhabitants are about 160,000. It became a borough on the passing of the Reform Bill, and has now attained to the importance of a corporation town under the new municipal act.

The atmosphere of this place, from the comparatively high position which it occupies, is not less congenial and kind than the dry sandy soil on which it is built. It does not, as it is justly remarked by a modern author, 'crouch in humility of site, but boldly solicits the ingress of the winds from each point of the compass; and as few of the streets lie on a dead flat, every shower conduces to cleanliness and health: this, with the admission of free access to currents of air, and the sun's genial rays, prevents agues, and all the train of epidemics, from being known.' There could not, perhaps, be adduced a stronger evidence of the truth of this remark, than the fact, that while the cholera, which passed through the kingdom like a destroying angel a few years since, was raging with the most destructive violence in the little town of Bilston, distant from Birmingham only about eight miles, and throughout the surrounding district of Staffordshire, scarcely a single fatal case of this disease occurred in this place. Many persons entertain the idea that our good town of Birmingham is literally enveloped in a cloud of dingy atmosphere, arising from steam-engines, and the various metallic manufactures in constant operation. A

* Philosophical Transactions, 1775.
† Edinburgh Journal of Science, vol. I.

* Transactions of the American Society, vol. II.

* Tilt, London.

distant view of the place, with the towering chimneys of its furnaces vomiting forth columns of smoke, might indeed seem to give confirmation to such an idea; but it becomes speedily dissipated as the visitor enters the clean and spacious streets of this town, and observes that the chimneys, from their extreme height, give their smoke to the winds, which carry it far away from the place where it is generated. It is well known, also, that the fuel which is used in its manufactures is much lighter than the Newcastle coal, and, consequently, deposits less of those black particles which thicken the air and disfigure the buildings of the metropolis.

The Restoration seems to have been the first era that gave an onward impulse to the ingenuity of the inhabitants of this town. The love of ornament and show was imported with the licentious Charles II., and the gay companions of his exile, from the luxurious court of Louis XIV., where they had been long resident. The flowery and flowing style superseded the stiff and Gothic, which characterised the furniture, domestic decorations, and personal embellishments of our ancestors. The sleight-of-hand attained by the artificers of Birmingham, fitly prepared them to take advantage of this change of fashions, and this town being the mart of the brilliant and ductile metals, soon became, what it was afterwards styled by Burke, 'the toy-shop of Europe.' The wars which spread over Europe from the time of Louis XIV. to the French Revolution, introduced a new era into the manufactures of Birmingham, and, in addition to the *bijouterie* of fashion, came the production of fire-arms, to supply both friends and enemies with warlike implements, from the richly ornamented pistol to the most ponderous piece of artillery, with all the manifold weapons of war. Peace has, however, literally 'beaten the swords into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks.' The dexterous artificers of the town were ready to profit by the change, and the fabrication of every species of agricultural instrument and working tool used in the peaceful handicraft arts, with the multifarious articles of personal attire, has followed. Successive demands, either of necessity or luxury, have called forth new and applicable powers to meet them, and the hammer, the lathe, the rolling apparatus, the press, the stamp, the die, the draw-bench, and the steam-engine, have each supplied their mechanical and multiplying agencies in the order of wants thus created. We know not that a time will ever arrive in which it shall be said to the inventive faculty of man, 'thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.' A long period of national and local tranquillity has given space for the creation of new wants, and the development of new energies. In this interval one discovery has followed fast upon another, the sciences have yielded to the patient perseverance and the penetrating genius of the human intellect, and new combinations of primitive elements have become the basis of new mechanical and handicraft inventions. The vastly accelerated energies of the mind have seemed to call for corresponding vivacity of physical locomotion, and man, whose imagination can stretch from place to place in the lapse of a moment, seems destined to attain to a celerity of corporeal transition almost coequal. The perfection of the steam-engine, and the application of this principle to locomotion, is another remarkable era in the history of this place, fraught with invaluable results. The improvement and completion, if not the discovery, of this wonderful engine, is indigenous to Birmingham, while the real science, ingenious contrivance, and manual dexterity concentrated in this place, with 'all the natural appliances to boot,' seem to bespeak for it the very extensive manufacture of this gigantic machine. Thus the whole circle of the mechanical arts, from a gold ring to an iron railroad, from a button to a brazen Colossus, from a teakettle to a steam-engine, appears destined to run its course in this highly favoured town, and its immediate neighbourhood, 'for ever and for aye.'

The visitor, on entering Birmingham, is most anxious to see its peculiar products, and the manufacturing process by which they are obtained. We will, therefore, in the first place, conduct him to the Show-Rooms of Mr Collis, who has succeeded to those formed with so much taste and splendour by Sir Edward Thomason. The great lions of this establishment are the faithful copies of the celebrated Warwick vase, and the colossal statue of George IV. in bronze. The original Warwick vase, which now stands in the conservatory of Warwick Castle, is the Grecian vase of Lysippus, a sculptor of the age of Alexander the Great. It was excavated from the ruins of Adrian's palace at Tivoli, and brought to England by Sir William Hamilton. The copy is metallic bronzed, and took the labour of seven years to complete. It has acquired by time, and the process adopted in its formation, a soft solidity of colour and a gradation of bronze tints, which give peculiar beauty to its rich and varied ornaments. The statue is of the same material, and was modelled, cast, and sculptured, in the manufactory. The suite of rooms is extensive, and the objects of curiosity and sale are classified. Amongst these is comprised the finest and most extensive collection of medals to be seen in the kingdom; miniature copies of the Warwick vase in silver, and in crystal, mounted on silver pedestals; a vast assemblage of plate and plated articles; and every minute variety of the ornamental and useful manufactures of the town.

A range of workshops and manufactories, where the most costly articles of the Show-Rooms have been fabricated, lie at the back part of the premises, and are open to the inspection of visitors.

The Show-Rooms of Messrs Jennens and Bettridge,

in Constitution Hill, offer a very attractive exhibition of the manufactures of Birmingham in *papier maché*. Perhaps there is no art, of an ornamental character, that has been transplanted into England from the country of its original invention, that has attained to so high a degree of perfection, and has been made susceptible of such multifarious varieties, as that which is included under this title. The respectable establishment to which we have now introduced the visitor, ranks as the first in this town, or perhaps in Europe, for its tasteful devices, the ingenious adaptation of beautiful materials, and the grace and finish of its execution. The sale-room displays some singularly beautiful specimens, inlaid with rainbow-tinted pearls, harmonising their cameo hues with all the subjects of natural history, and thrown into all the forms and figures of ornament and use. The exhibition also comprehends that almost endless variety of indispensable articles which enter into the purposes of every-day life. A free admission is given to the visitors into the workshops, and the process of the manufactures very courteously and minutely described, if required.

Glass-making is an art practised with so much dexterity by the workman, and the various articles to which it applies are multiplied with so much expedition, that it might be thought the productions of one year, in this glass-blowing town, would leave a holiday for several succeeding years. Happily, however, for the artisan in this branch of human device, the brilliant utensil is as easily broken as the air bubbles of a child, which it not inaptly resembles in its first appearance at the end of the artificer's tube, before it is fashioned by the breath of his mouth into the form which it is finally intended to assume. The process of glass-cutting, nevertheless, is not of so aerial a character. It requires a practised eye and a dexterous hand, and is, besides, a work of continued labour and persevering industry. Both these departments of the manufacturing art are carried on to a great extent in this place, and a splendid variety of their united productions is to be found in an extensive suite of show-rooms belonging to Messrs Rollason and Sons, in Steelhouse-lane. In this exhibition there is also an assemblage of the most brilliant and useful productions of the Staffordshire potteries in all their variety of decoration, form, and application. The proprietors are very polite in showing to visitors the process of glass making and cutting, as carried on in the manufactories with which they are connected.

Besides those exhibitions which have been enumerated, Birmingham contains many splendid shops devoted to the display of its peculiar productions—of which the most eminent are in High Street, Bull Street, and New Street. Many of the manufactories, not connected with any retail establishments, may be visited by strangers, upon application, or by an introduction from some respectable inhabitant of the town.

The stranger, after having travelled over workshops and manufactories, will be glad to find himself once more in the open street; and as 'restlessness is the peculiar character of the present generation,' he need not tarry long before he discovers another object ready to engage his attention, and, we predict, to fix for some time his admiration. The Town Hall is the most magnificent structure in Birmingham, and from its pure classic design, elaborate architectural ornaments, extent and capacity, is an object of well-merited curiosity and interest to every visitor. It is a simple Corinthian temple, from the example of the temple of Jupiter Stator at Rome, and is the design of Messrs Hansom and Welch. It is built of brick, cased with Anglesey marble, from the Penmon quarries, which was presented by Sir Richard Bulkley, Bart., to the architects, and from them to the town. Its quality is considered almost imperishable, and the colour is a fine neutral grey which whitens with time.

It is colossal in its proportions, and rears itself with peculiar majesty from nearly the highest point in Birmingham. On each side and in front is a projecting rusticated basement of prodigious strength, twenty-three feet in height, which encloses a spacious corridor, and convenient entrances to the great hall. Surmounting the basement is a gradual flight of regular ascending lines of shallow steps, and on these rise, with surpassing grace and dignity, elevated ranges of richly-fluted Corinthian columns that encompass the building. The spacious room which this splendid edifice contains, is perhaps the largest in Europe, or in the world, having a clear length of 145 feet, with 65 feet in width and height. It will contain from eight to ten thousand persons, standing within its ample area, and possesses two side galleries tastefully decorated, which are entered by doors from the corridor behind, with an end gallery of great depth and elevation. It is lighted by twenty-seven lofty windows, separated by ornamental pilasters of the same order as the building; by the side of which are massy antique candelabra, harmonising with the colour of the interior, and taking their tone from the walls and the rich impanelled ceiling. A grand staircase in front leads to the galleries, which flies off to the right and left to correspond with the upper corridors. The projected cost of this magnificent structure was £24,000, raised by a rate upon the inhabitants of the town; besides which, £6000 was paid by the friends of Mr Welch, one of the architects, who became bound for the accomplishment of the contract, which was found inadequate to the undertaking. The total amount therefore was £30,000.

The entire end of the hall is filled by an orchestra and the splendid organ, placed here by the governors of the hospital for the use of the triennial musical

festivals, instituted for the purpose of aiding the funds of that charity. This magnificent organ, in its dimensions, exceeds the celebrated instruments of Haarlem and Rotterdam; and in the depth, power, variety, and sweetness of its tones, far surpasses any in Europe. It was built by Mr Hill of London, at the expense of £6000, raised principally by subscription."

WALKS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

ROOM OF EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES.—SECOND ARTICLE.

At the conclusion of the preceding article, we were speaking of the specimens of household furniture of the Egyptians to be seen in the British Museum. Besides those remarkably interesting articles, there are found in the collection a variety of specimens of utensils for domestic use, such as vases, jugs, and similar vessels of different shapes and sizes. These are mostly of earthenware, glazed or plain, and the majority of them resemble in shape the brown jars or pitchers which are extensively used in the rural districts of our own country in the present day, having narrow necks, with or without handles, and rounded bodies terminating in a flat broad base. These jugs are of all sizes, from the height of an inch or two to a foot and a half, or two feet. Most of them are more or less covered with figures and hieroglyphics. The same may be said of the numerous other vases which we find here, which are not of earthenware, but of marble, alabaster, porphyry, green basalt, glass, or metal. These are generally of smaller bulk, and of the most varied and fanciful shapes, some of them having long necks, and others short; some presenting round bodies, others flat; while some rest on broad bases, and others on narrow or on rounded ones—in which latter case they are intended for being placed on stands. Till the present day, in Italy, the brown earthen pitchers of the peasantry are formed with pointed bases, and are placed in stands for their support. Specimens of glass bottles are likewise seen with long necks, and altogether resembling a kind of case-bottle now very common in Britain. The colour of the glass is usually an opaque green. We do not discover any instance in which colourless transparent glass has been used in the manufacture of these articles. The nearest approach to it occurs in the case of some small bottles made of porphyry, which, though streaked beautifully with yellow, black, blue, and green, are on the whole lighter in hue, and more transparent, than any similar articles to be seen on these shelves. Porcelain was another substance, with the manufacture of which the Egyptians were well acquainted. Numbers of jugs and vases, made of this material, present themselves to the spectator in the shelves of the Museum. Looking at these articles collectively, every one must be impressed with the conviction, that, as regarded glasses and such like vessels for domestic use, the people of ancient Egypt were far from being ill provided either in point of comfort or elegance.

A very perfect specimen of the *stands* or supports upon which vases or rounded bottles were placed in the Egyptian houses, is to be seen in one of the Museum cases. This stand is about two feet in height, of a pyramidal shape, but with the top flattened, and a cup placed thereon for the reception of the vase. The four legs of this stand are joined by crossing spars, and the whole is formed of wood, gaudily painted. Such articles were probably intended for standing at the elbows of guests during entertainments, or for holding ointments and perfumes in dressing-rooms, and must have formed an elegant addition to the other furniture, if we may judge from this specimen.

In one case of the Egyptian room (that marked with the letter T), we find some very dusky-looking crumbs, which, but for some explanation on the part of those better acquainted with the matter, might be passed over as relics of no very important kind. These, however, are really interesting articles, being specimens of the bread in use among the Egyptians. The colour of these remnants is a dark brown, and they resemble grains of coarse sand. From the stones found in them, it is obvious that some of these morsels of bread have been formed from the fruit of the date-tree, while other fragments appear to be composed of barley and wheat. One or two small cakes still retain their perfect original shape, that of a flat shrunken pancake, into which they were put by some Egyptian housewife three thousand years ago. They constituted part of a small but complete feast discovered in a tomb at Thebes, and beside them lie several other articles of food that were found along with them. Among these, a dish of raisins is particularly noticeable, being scarcely distinguishable in appearance from the same articles as found in shops at the present day. But the most remarkable portions of this same feast are two ducks, now in the condition of shrivelled skeletons, lying upon a stand or platter, made of cane and papyrus. Whether this feast, however, was ever intended for human use, or was merely placed in the tomb in accordance with the ceremonial usages of the country, may be a reasonable matter of doubt. The latter supposition is certainly the probable one. But this circumstance does not affect the feelings which these venerable ducks are calculated to excite in our

minds. The sight of them carries us forcibly back into the domestic presence of the human beings who so far preceded us on the stage of time. How little could the dresser of these fowls have foretold or foreseen that they were destined to become objects of curiosity to the world, after the lapse of so many ages!

In the same case with these edible remains, we find a yoke and strap, of a kind extensively used by the Egyptians in carrying burdens. Generally speaking, this resembles the yoke employed by milk-carriers at the present day, to suspend their pails from. The wooden bar formed to cross from shoulder to shoulder, is somewhat more than three feet long, and in shape like an unstrung bow, the middle being slightly bent, and the ends curved the reverse way. From each of these ends a strap depends, formed of a strong double thong of leather, fifteen inches or so in length. There are loops at the end of these straps, for the purpose, seemingly, of attaching loads. This yoke served almost all the purposes of Egyptian labour, where things were to be conveyed to a distance, as is shown by the figures on the painted tombs. Placed beside this yoke in the Museum, we observe a strong ladder of rope, an article which, with proper fastening, might obviously be as securely used for general purposes, as the common wooden ladders employed at the present day.

In the cases adjoining the preceding one, an immense number of small yet curious articles present themselves, consisting of edge-tools of various kinds, carpenters' instruments, warlike weapons, and the like. There are several specimens of common knives, with fixed blade and handle. These are of various sizes, and do not exhibit much skill in the workmanship, though the disfigurements of time must be partly taken into account. We looked in vain for any instance of a knife with closing blade. The only specimen of a shutting knife was a curiously contrived one, resembling a pair of scissors, in so far as the cutting was effected by two meeting edges, but having the point of support at the extremity, instead of being in the centre. A pair of nut-crackers gives an idea of the principle on which the knife was made. It seemed a very awkward weapon, and could only divide small bodies introduced between the blades. In regard to handy, useful knives, therefore, modern times appear to have really a decided advantage. Not so in the case of sickles or reaping-hooks. Making allowance for a little rust, a sickle to be seen here might have been taken, as respects shape and size, for one newly from the shop of a modern ironmonger. Numberless have been the attempts to improve the form of reaping instruments in recent years, but thrice ten hundred years ago, the grain of the earth was cut just as it is now. Strange to say, we find here also almost all the carpenter tools now in use. Fortunately, a recent visitor to Egypt, Mr Burton, discovered in one of the tombs of Thebes a basket with a complete assortment of carpenters' instruments; and these, being lodged in the Museum, are now open to the inspection of the curious. Among them, we find a *saw*, *chisels*, a *mallet*, *drill* and *drill-bone*, with a small *horn of oil*, and a bag, seemingly for *nails*; the whole representing the stock in trade, or part of the stock, of some defunct carpenter, with whose remains they had been committed to earth. The *saw* is a small one, fitted for use with one hand, and fashioned something like a carving-knife. Perhaps most people will consider the drill as the most interesting of these articles, from its exhibiting the instrumental skill to which the carpenters of ancient Egypt had attained. The oil-horn differs in no point from those in general use at this day. In the same cases are a number of Egyptian nails of different sizes. These are headed precisely like modern ones, but we observe no *arrows-nails* in the collection, and, in truth, this variety of the article seems to have been unknown to the Egyptians—though rust would render the matter difficult, occasionally, to determine.

Saws, chisels, mallets, drills and bows, bags of nails, and oil-horns, appear, then, from the models here presented, to have been the common instruments of the carpenters of long past ages. And are they not the ordinary and chief tools of the trade yet! Certainly the people of Egypt must either have been a peculiarly clever race, or man's invention is at best a bounded and barren thing. The same reflection is forced upon us when we look at other edge-tools in these cases. Here is a dagger, which, in its palmy days, must have been as handsome an article as any Highland chief could wish to see at his girdle at a meeting of the clans on Braemar. It is of the size of a small dirk, and has a handsome handle of ivory, once ornamented, it is probable, with precious stones. We have also before us on these shelves a beautiful specimen of a battle-axe. The blade is of bronze, in the shape of a segment of a circle, and is affixed to a strong *silver* tube, into which the handle, of ivory probably, was once inserted. These have been elegant weapons, quite equal, in their way, to any thing of the kind in the hands of modern warriors. It is true that the invention of gunpowder has made a great change in one respect. In place of pistol locks and Joe Manton barrels, the Egyptian armoury in the British Museum presents to us but a poor equivalent in the form of arrow-heads and long-feathered reeds. The Egyptian arrows, however, were far from being rude or ineffective weapons. Several neat specimens have been preserved of the metal barbs with which they were usually tipped; and from some of the paintings in the Theban tombs, we learn that, as regarded the shape and manufacture of the bows, the elegance of the painted leather cases in which they were kept, and other points about the archer's equip-

ment, the moderns who practise this exercise would suffer by a comparison with the Egyptians.

Some sadly mutilated fragments of stringed instruments arrest the attention of the visitor to the room of Egyptian antiquities. A fragment of a large harp is here seen, with the pegs, to the number of seventeen, remaining in the position in which the strings were attached to them. There are other relics of a similar kind, but all of them, unfortunately, are very incomplete, and deficient in the strings, which were formed by the Egyptians from catgut. This loss is not altogether the necessary result of time acting on a perishable substance, for instruments have been found in the Egyptian tombs, which possessed strings that sounded on being struck, after a silence of three thousand years. The true Egyptian harp appears to have been of an erect curved shape, like the modern harp, and to have rested on a base of more or less breadth. Besides these fragments of stringed instruments, the British Museum contains some smaller musical articles, and among others a pair of cymbals, of five inches diameter, and formed of sounding brass. It is to be regretted that more relics of a musical nature have not come down to us, as there is every reason to suppose, from the evidence of the sepulchral paintings, that the Egyptians were partial to the science, and possessed numerous instruments, both stringed and otherwise. They were well acquainted with the drum, and indeed a very perfect specimen of this instrument was found recently by a foreigner at Thebes. How interesting would have been a discovery of portions of their music—if, indeed, they possessed the art of notation in any form. Of this, however, there can be little doubt from the number of their instruments; though, as the interpretation would have been a most difficult affair, we have less reason to lament the thefts that time has made in this particular instance.

THE LATE DR BOWDITCH.

OF NATHANIEL BOWDITCH, the eminent American translator and editor of Laplace's *Mécanique Céleste* (Mechanism of the Heavens), who died in his sixty-fifth year, on the 16th of March 1833, the following biographic sketch is presented in the North American Review for January last, as a concluding note to a review of his literary and scientific services:—

"It was from an humble condition in early life, that (in part, no doubt, by force of extraordinary natural endowments, but also by force of a principled energy, alert to take advantage of every opportunity of improvement, and refusing to be depressed by any discouraging circumstances) Dr Bowditch rose to be one of the most eminent persons of his country, and of the time. The son of a working cooper, enjoying no advantages of instruction in early childhood beyond those of attendance on a public school, and those only till he was ten years of age, he was, two or three years after, apprenticed to a ship-chandler, and continued in this service through his minority; at the end of which time he went to sea, as an inferior officer in a merchant vessel. Meanwhile, by the diligent use of such fragments of time as he was able to redeem for study, from regular daily employment of so different a kind, he had (besides laying up stores in general literature, which would have done no discredit to a youth devoted to that pursuit) made such proficiency in his favourite science, as enabled him, three years after, to publish a work, the 'Practical Navigator,' scarcely surpassed in usefulness by any of the time, and immediately driving all others of the same class out of circulation. Being unable to purchase books, he borrowed and copied such as he most needed, possessing himself thus, before he was fourteen years old, of a long treatise on Algebra, another on Geometry, and a third on Conic Sections. At fifteen, making all the necessary calculations, he had arranged an Almanac, complete in all its parts. Obtaining, by a fortunate accident, a copy of Newton's 'Principia,' he learned Latin by himself, that he might read the work, and made a translation of the whole of it.

Entering upon an active life of business, Dr Bowditch made four voyages to the East Indies, and one to Europe, diligently devoting his leisure at sea to his favourite inquiries, which, however, with a liberal sense of the value of other knowledge, he diversified by studies of a more generally attractive kind. Retiring from a seafaring life at the age of thirty, he assumed an office, that of President of an Insurance Company in his native town, which, to most men, would have seemed to afford sufficient employment for their time; and from this, at the end of twenty years, he was transferred to the place of Actuary of the Massachusetts Life Insurance Company, which he held till the time of his death. It was by an economy of the leisure hours of a life thus engaged, that Dr Bowditch won for himself one of the highest names in science, which the nineteenth century boasts.

Nor was it by any jealous and churlish economy of those hours. No man acknowledged more readily the claims of friendly intercourse; no man welcomed more cordially the interruptions which they bring. His study was his parlour, where no posture of a hard unfinished problem ever caused the unexpected guest to feel that his visit was untimely. No abstraction ever revealed the toiling or wearied mind. A gay buoyancy of spirits, and a prompt interest in whatever subject was presented, showed, whenever you found the man, that you found him before his work, and at his ease. Early hours, an utter abstinence from mere waste of time, and temperate habits which preserved the mind in perpetual vigour, permitted a life crowded with labour and its

fruits to be, in an equal degree, tranquil, free from care, and accessible to incidental engagements.

Along with great heartiness, Dr Bowditch had its usual attendant, a warm impetuosity of character; and, though no 'rude and boisterous captain of the sea,' there may have been occasions when a happier combination would have been produced, had the same measure of the fortlier in *re* been blended with more of the *sus-citer in modo*. But his high and rigid integrity was beyond question. His punctilious justice in the conduct of complicated affairs was a model for imitation. If he had prejudices, he had candour to welcome and weigh the evidence which would dispel them; and anger he carried 'as the flint bears fire'; the spark was quick, but it was momentary.

Acquiring what in a frugal community may deserve to be called wealth, he had the high wisdom to know its worth; that is, to know its uses. He cared for it as making him independent, and enabling him to be useful. In his life, as well as at his death, he gave freely from it to worthy objects of benevolence, public and private; and he expended a large portion of it, without any hope of remuneration, on the publication of his great work; declining, from a nice sense of honour, the urgent proposals of a learned society (the American Academy), and of private friends, that he would permit it to be issued at their charge. Of his time, his counsels, and his influence, he was as liberal, for good objects, as of his money.

Proof against less mischievous delusions, the madness of the 'undevout astronomer' had no place in his clear and sober mind. The Christian faith, the support of his principles through a long active life, was a sufficient source of consolation to him during the well-understood approach of death. Of cant and pretension, no man ever had less. But he had as little respect for the affectation which suppresses and disguises cherished sentiments, as for that which obtrudes and parades them. He thought it due to the truths which sustained him, to allow it to be known that it was on them that he leaned; and the chamber of his decline was a scene of the sublimest instruction for whoever would know, with what serene, magnanimous satisfaction, the spirit, which has well done the first part of its work, may pass on to its higher destinies."

LITTLE SNOWDROP,

A STORY FOR LITTLE FOLKS.*

ONE cold winter day, when the snow-flakes were falling like feathers from the sky, a good queen sat sewing at a window, which had a framework of black ebony. And as she sewed, and looked through the black framework at the snow, she pricked her finger with the needle, and three drops of blood fell upon the white linen. Then thought the queen within herself, "Oh that I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as the ebony framework!" Not long after, a little daughter was given to her, that was as white as snow, as red as blood, and had hair as black as ebony, and therefore was called LITTLE SNOWDROP. Soon after, the good queen died; and when a year had passed away, the king took to himself another spouse. She was a beautiful woman, but vain and tyrannical, and could not endure that there should be any body in the world that was thought to be more beautiful than herself. Now, she had a wonderful looking-glass, and when she went and looked at herself in it, and said,

"Glass, glass, that hangs on the wall,
Who in the land is the fairest of all?"

the looking-glass answered,

"Lady Queen, in the land thou art fairest of all."

Then was she content, for she knew that the looking-glass spoke the truth. Now, Little Snowdrop grew apace, and became every day more lovely, and when she was seven years old, she was as beautiful as day, and more beautiful than the queen herself. So it was, that when one day the queen asked her looking-glass again,

"Glass, glass, that hangs on the wall,
Who in the land is the fairest of all?"

it answered,

"Lady Queen, thou art fair as fair may be,
But Snowdrop's a thousand times fairer than thee."

When the queen heard this, she became pale with jealousy and anger. From that hour forward, as often as she looked upon little Snowdrop, her heart burned within her with hatred towards the maiden. Her jealousy and pride increased daily, and at last became so great that she could not even rest at night. Then she sent for a servant, and said to him, "Take the child out with you into the forest; I cannot bear the sight of her. And when you get to the forest, kill her, and bring me back her lungs and liver as a token that you have done so." The servant did as he was bid, and carried Little Snowdrop away to kill her. But when he had drawn his dagger, and was going to plunge it into the child's heart, she began to weep, and said, "Oh, good man, spare my life; I will run about in the wild wood, and never more come home again!" Little Snowdrop was so young and so beautiful that the servant had compassion upon her, and said, "Run away, then, my poor child. The wild beasts will soon have eaten thee up." In his heart, however, he was right glad that he had not killed the child, and as a young fawn just then came bounding past, he struck it down, took out its lungs and liver, and brought them to the

* Translated for this work from the German.

queen. The cook was ordered to salt and dress them, and the wicked woman ate them up, and thought that she had eaten Little Snowdrop's lungs and liver.

The poor child was now all alone in the wide forest, and in such distress that she trembled all over. She looked and looked at the leaves upon the trees, and did not know how to help herself. At last she began to run over the sharp stones, and through the briars and thorns; but though the wild beasts crossed her on her way, yet they did her no harm. She ran as long as her feet could carry her, and night was about to close in when she saw a little house, and went in to rest herself. In the house every thing was small, small, but pretty and neat, as nobody can tell. In it stood a little table, spread with white, and seven little plates upon it, every plate with its spoon, and seven little knives and forks, and seven cups besides. Against the wall were seven little beds ranged all along, covered with sheets that were white as snow. Little Snowdrop, being very hungry and thirsty, ate out of every plate a little crumb and bread, and drank from every cup a drop of wine; for she did not wish to take the whole away from one only. After that, because she was so tired, she lay down in one of the little beds, but none of them fitted; one was too long, another was too short; but at last the seventh was just the size. So she laid herself down in it, and after saying her prayers, fell fast asleep. When it was quite dark, came the masters of the house, who were seven dwarfs, that dug and delved for ore in the mountains. They lighted their seven little candles, and by the light they saw that some one had been in their house, for nothing was standing in the same order that they had left it. The first said, "Who has been sitting on my chair?" The second, "Who has been eating off my plate?" The third, "Who has taken a bite out of my cookie?" The fourth, "Who has been eating my crumb?" The fifth, "Who has been using my fork?" The sixth, "Who has been cutting with my knife?" The seventh, "Who has been drinking out of my cup?" Then the first looked round, and saw a little hollow in his bed, and he said, "Who has been into my bed?" The others came running, and cried, "Somebody has been lying in mine too!" But the seventh, when he looked into his bed, beheld Little Snowdrop, who was lying there fast asleep. Then he called the others, who came running up, and cried aloud for very wonder, and held up their seven little candles to look at Little Snowdrop. "Oh, good heavens! oh, good heavens!" they exclaimed, "what a beautiful child!" and so great was their delight, that they could not think of waking her up, but let her sleep on in the little bed. And the seventh dwarf slept with his companions, hour about, and so passed the night.

When it was morning, Little Snowdrop awoke, and when she saw the seven wee men, she was greatly afraid. But they were kind and gentle to her, and asked, "What is your name?" "My name is Little Snowdrop," she answered. "How did you come into our house?" asked the seven wee men once more. Then the child told them how her stepmother had wished to put her to death, but that the servant had spared her life, and after that she had run the whole day, till at last she had come to their little cottage. "If you will manage our house for us," said the dwarfs, "cook, make the beds, wash, sew, and stitch, and keep every thing clean and tidy, you may stay with us, and you shall never want for any thing." Little Snowdrop promised, and remained with them. She kept their house in the best order. Every morning they went to the mountains in search of ore; in the evening they came back, and then their meal must be ready for them. All the day through, the maiden was alone, but the good little dwarfs warned her, and said, "Take heed of your stepmother, who will soon learn that you are here; therefore let nobody in."

Now, the queen, who thought that she had eaten Little Snowdrop's lungs and liver, never dreamt but that she was the first and fairest lady in the world. So she stood before her glass, and said,

"Glass, glass, that hangs on the wall,
Who in the land is the fairest of all?"

But the glass answered,

"Lady Queen, thou art fair as fair may be;
But Little Snowdrop that lives in the glen,
Over the hills, with the seven wee men,
Is a thousand times fairer still than thee."

Then she was afraid, for she knew that the glass never spoke untruth. She also saw that her servant had deceived her, for that Little Snowdrop was still alive. So she hated poor Little Snowdrop only so much the more, and set about devising some fresh plan for her destruction; for as long as she was not for certain the fairest in all the land, she could not rest. She coloured her face, put on the dress of an old huckster-wife, and made herself so that no one could have known her. In this disguise she went across the seven mountains to the cottage of the seven dwarfs, knocked at their door, and cried, "Fine wares to sell! cheap and good—fine wares to sell!" Little Snowdrop peeped out of the window, and said, "Good day, my good woman! What have you got to sell?" "Good wares, pretty wares!" answered she; "snoods of all colours, my pretty maid!" With that she took out one that was twined of party-coloured silk. "I may let the honest woman in," thought Little Snowdrop, and thereupon undid the bolt, and bought the bonny snood. "Child," said the old woman, "how pretty you look! Come, I'll put it on nicely for you!" Little Snowdrop had no suspicion; so she stood up, and let her fasten on the snood; but the old woman threw it hastily over

her neck, and pulled and pulled so hard, that at last Little Snowdrop lost her breath, and she sank down as if she were dead. "Take that for being the fairest!" said the hag, and hurried away. Not long after, at eventide, the seven dwarfs came home, and great was their dismay to find their dear Little Snowdrop lying upon the ground, stiff and motionless as if she were dead. They lifted her up, and seeing the snood bound so tightly on, they cut it asunder, upon which she began once more to breathe, and by little and little came back to life. When the dwarfs heard what had happened, they said, "The old hucksterwife was nobody but the queen; take care not to let any body in when we are not with thee!"

Now, the wicked woman, whenever she got home, went to her glass, and asked,

"Glass, glass, that hangs on the wall,
Who in the land is the fairest of all?"

Then the glass answered,

"Lady Queen, thou art fair as fair may be;
But Little Snowdrop that lives in the glen,
Over the hills, with the seven wee men,
Is a thousand times fairer still than thee."

When the wicked queen heard this, all her blood ran to her heart, she was so dismayed, for she knew well that Little Snowdrop was alive again. "But now," she said, "I will I fall upon a plan to destroy her without fail," and with the witch's arts, which she understood, she made a poisoned comb. Then she dressed herself up in the disguise of an old woman, and away she went across the seven mountains to the seven dwarfs, knocked at their door, and cried, "Fine wares to sell—cheap and good, fine wares to sell!" Little Snowdrop looked out and said, "Pass on your way, my good woman; I daren't let any body in." "Nobody can blame you for looking at least," said the old woman, as she drew out the poisoned comb, and held it up. The simple child was so taken with it, that she let herself be befooled, and opened the door. When she had looked at the comb, and fingered it in every way, the old woman said, "Now, I will put in the comb nicely for you!" Poor innocent Little Snowdrop gave the old woman leave; but scarcely had it been fixed in her hair, when the poison began to work, and she fell senseless to the ground. "Thou paragon of beauty, now is thy fate sealed!" said the wicked woman, and went away. By good luck it was not far from evening, when the seven dwarfs came home. When they beheld Little Snowdrop lying upon the ground, as if she were dead, they at once suspected the wicked stepmother. They accordingly made a search, and found the poisoned comb; and when they had drawn it out, Little Snowdrop came to herself again, and told them what had passed. Then they entreated her once more to be upon her guard, and not to open the door to any one.

As soon as she got home, the queen stationed herself before her glass, and said,

"Glass, glass, that hangs on the wall,
Who in the land is the fairest of all?"

Then it answered, as before,

"Lady Queen, thou art fair as fair may be,
But Little Snowdrop that lives in the glen,
Over the hills, with the seven wee men,
Is a thousand times fairer still than thee."

When she heard the glass speak this way, she trembled, and shook with rage. "Snowdrop shall die," she exclaimed, "though it cost me my own life!" With this she went into a secret lonesome chamber, and there made an apple, that looked beautiful on the outside—white it was, with rosy cheeks—so that whoever gazed on it, longed for it; but inside, one-half of it was so poisoned, that whoever took even the smallest piece of it into his mouth, was sure to die. When the apple was ready, she painted her face, disguised herself as a peasant woman, and so away across the mountains to the cottage of the seven dwarfs. She knocked, and Little Snowdrop stretched her head out of the window, and said, "I daren't let any body in; the seven dwarfs have forbidden me." "Very well," answered the peasant woman, "I only want to get quit of my apples. There is one as a present for you!" "No!" said Little Snowdrop, "I dare not take any thing." "Oh, I suppose you think it poisonous," said the old woman. "Look you, I will cut the apple in two; do you eat the red cheeks, I will eat the white." And as she said this, she held out the poisoned half of the apple. Little Snowdrop felt a great longing for the beautiful apple; and when she saw the peasant woman eat a piece of it, she could resist no longer, but stretched out her hand, and took the poisoned half. Scarcely had she taken a bite of it into her mouth, when she fell down dead. The queen gazed upon her with a look of triumph, laughed long and loud, and said, "White as snow, red as blood, black as ebony! this time the dwarfs cannot waken you again." And when she inquired of the glass at home,

"Glass, glass, that hangs on the wall,
Who in the land is the fairest of all?"

it answered at last,

"Lady Queen, in the land thou art fairest of all."

Then her envious heart was at peace, as far as an envious heart can be at peace. The seven little men, when they came home at night, found Little Snowdrop lying on the ground. There was not a breath stirring in her. She was dead. They lifted her up, examined if there was any thing poisonous about her, undid her dress, combed her hair, washed her with water and wine; but it was all in vain. The dear child was dead—quite dead. They placed her upon a bier, and they all seven sat round about, bewailing their dear Little Snowdrop, and they wept three whole days long. After that they

would have buried her, but that she still looked as fresh as a living creature, and still retained her beautiful red cheeks. "We cannot bury this still lovely creature in the black earth," they said; and so by their art they made a transparent coffin of glass, where you might see in from every side. In this coffin they laid Little Snowdrop, and upon it wrote her name in golden letters, and that she was a king's daughter. Then they set the coffin out upon the mountain, and one of them always remained beside it, and kept watch. And the beasts came too, and mourned for Little Snowdrop—first an owl, then a raven, and last of all a dove. Little Snowdrop lay a long long time in the coffin, and did not change, but looked as though she were asleep; for she was still as white as snow, as red as blood, and had hair as black as ebony.

Now, it fell out that a king's son chanced to hunt in the forest, and came to the house of the seven dwarfs to pass the night there. He saw the coffin upon the mountain, and the beautiful Little Snowdrop inside, and read what was written upon it. Then he said to the little men, "Let me have the coffin. I will give you whatsoever you desire for it." But the little men answered, "We would not give it for all the gold in the world." Then he said, "Do give it me, for I cannot live without seeing Little Snowdrop; I will honour and esteem it as the thing nearest to my heart." Hearing him speak thus, the good dwarfs felt compassion for him, and gave him the coffin, and the king's son ordered his attendants to bear it away upon their shoulders. It so happened that they stumbled over a bush; and with the shock, the piece of the poisoned apple which Little Snowdrop had bitten, fell out of her mouth, and she came to life again. Then she raised herself up, and said, "Kind heavens! where am I?" "Thou art with me!" exclaimed the king's son, full of joy, and told her what had happened. "I love thee dearer," he said, "than all the world besides. Come with me to my father's castle; thou shalt be my bride." Little Snowdrop consented, and went along with him, and their marriage was celebrated with great solemnity and splendour.

Now, Little Snowdrop's stepmother was invited to the feast with the rest; and when she had decked herself in her finest attire, she went to her glass, and said,

"Glass, glass, that hangs on the wall,
Who in the land is the fairest of all?"

then the glass answered,

"Lady Queen, thou art fair as fair may be,
But the young queen a thousand times fairer than thee."

Upon this the wicked woman fell into such a fit of rage that she appeared as if about to lose her senses. When able to reflect a little, she was at first inclined to stay away from the marriage; but, after all, she could not rest till she went and beheld the young queen that was fairer than herself. When she entered, she recognised Little Snowdrop, and stood stock still with terror and dismay. Meanwhile, a pair of iron slippers, that had been heated in a fierce coal fire, were brought in, and these fiery-red shoes the queen was forced to put on, and to dance in them, until her feet were piteously burnt. Neither was she permitted to stop until she had danced herself to death.

CIVILISING INFLUENCES OF COMMERCE.

THE influences of commerce in extending the limits of civilisation, in both the past and present ages of the world, are admirably set forth in the following passages from an Address delivered before the Mercantile Library Association, at Boston, September 13, 1833, by Governor Everett.

"When we contemplate the past, we see some of the most important phenomena in human history intimately—I had almost said mysteriously—connected with commerce. In the very dawn of civilisation, the art of alphabetical writing sprang up among a commercial people. One can almost imagine that these wonderfully convenient elements were a kind of shorthand, which the Phœnician merchants, under the spur of necessity, contrived for keeping their accounts; for what could they have done with hieroglyphics of the Egyptian priesthood, applied to the practical purposes of a commerce which extended over the known world, and of which we have preserved to us such a curious and instructive description by the prophet Ezekiel? A thousand years later, and the same commercial race among whom this sublime invention had its origin, performed a not less glorious part as the champions of freedom.

When the Macedonian madman commenced his crusade against Asia, the Phœnicians opposed the only vigorous resistance to his march. The Tyrian merchants delayed him longer beneath the walls of their sea-girt city, than Darius at the head of all the armies of the East. In the succeeding centuries, when the dynasties established by Alexander were crumbling, and the Romans in turn took up the march of universal conquest and dominion, the commercial city of Carthage, the daughter of Tyre, afforded the most efficient check to their progress. But there was nowhere sufficient security for property in the old world, to form the basis of a permanent commercial prosperity. In the middle ages, the iron yoke of the feudal system was broken by commerce. The emancipation of Europe from the detestable sway of the barons, began with the privileges granted to the cities. The wealth acquired in commerce afforded the first counterpoise to that of the feudal chiefs who monopolised the land, and in the space of a century and a half gave birth to a new civilisation. In the west of Europe, the Hanse towns; in the east, the cities of Venice, Genoa, the ports of Sicily and Naples, Florence, Pisa, and Leghorn, began to swarm with active crowds. The Mediterranean, deserted for nearly ten centuries, is covered with vessels. Merchants from the Adriatic explore the farthest east;

silk, spices, gums, gold, are distributed from the Italian cities through Europe, and the dawn of a general revival breaks on the world. Nature, at this juncture, discloses another of those mighty mysteries, which man is permitted from age to age to read in her awful volume. As the fulness of time approaches for the new world to be found, it is discovered that a piece of steel may be so prepared, that it will point a steady index to the pole. After it had led the adventurers of Italy, Spain, and Portugal, to the utmost limits of the old world—from Iceland to the south of Africa—the immortal discoverer, with the snows and sorrows of near sixty years upon his head, but with the fire of immortal youth in his heart, placed himself under the guidance of the mysterious pilot, bravely followed its mute direction through the terrors and the dangers of the unknown sea, and called a new hemisphere into being.

It would be easy to connect with this discovery almost all the great events of modern history, and, still more, all the great movements of modern civilisation. Even in the colonisation of New England, although more than almost any other human enterprise the offspring of the religious feeling, commercial adventure opened the way and furnished the means. As time rolled on, and events hastened to their consummation, commercial relations suggested the chief topics in the great controversy for liberty. The British Navigation Act was the original foundation of the colonial grievances. There was a constant struggle to break away from the limits of the monopoly imposed by the mother country. The American navigators could find no walls or barriers on the face of the deep, and they were determined that paper and parchment should not shut up what God had thrown open. The moment the war of independence was over, the commercial enterprise of the country went forth like an uncaged eagle, who, having beaten himself almost to madness against the bars of his prison, rushes out at length to his native element, and exults as he bathes his undaunted eye in the sun-beam, or pillows his breast upon the storm. Our merchants were far from contenting themselves with treading obsequiously in the footsteps even of the great commercial nation from which we are descended. Ten years had not elapsed from the close of the revolutionary war, before the infant commerce of America had struck out for herself a circuit in some respects broader and bolder than that of England. Besides penetrating the remotest haunts of the commerce heretofore carried on by the trading nations of Europe—the recesses of the Mediterranean, the Baltic, and the White seas—she displayed the stars and the stripes in distant oceans, where the Lion and the Lilies never floated. She not only engaged with spirit in the trade with Hindostan and China, which had been thought to be beyond the grasp of individual capital and enterprise, but she explored new markets on islands and coasts before unapproached by modern commerce.

THE STOLEN GIPSEY GIRL.

A NUMBER of years ago, two little girls, each about the age of five or six years, disappeared about one and the same time from the houses of their respective parents, who lived at separate and distant points in the south of France. The cause for the disappearance of these children was the same in both cases; namely, the dread of domestic correction for some trifling fault. Marguerite Cogordan, one of the girls, was taken away from the town of Valensole by a band of gipsies, who met the child at a fair there, and found her not unwilling to go with them. For nearly twenty years, Marguerite Cogordan lived with the gipsies, passing with them from place to place, but always retaining an indistinct recollection of her native spot, though she had forgot its name. Her longings to return to her parents, and her imperfect remembrances, were treated by those around her as the ravings of insanity.

At length Marguerite left the company of gipsies, and got into service with a judge of the town of Carcassone, also in the south of France. To her new master the girl disclosed the wandering reminiscences that preyed on her mind respecting her home and friends. The judge pitied the young woman, and paid every attention to her statements, with the view of discovering her relatives for her. At length it struck him that her descriptions of scenery applied to the district of the Lower Alps, and he addressed letters to a chief magistrate of Digne, the chief town of the department. The party addressed knew of no case where a girl had disappeared from Digne, but he chanced to remember that the name of Cogordan was not an uncommon one in the little neighbouring town of Valensole, and wrote to Carcassone, stating this fact to Marguerite's master, and adding that her description of the scene of her birth applied perfectly to Valensole.

Upon receipt of this information, the judge set out with Marguerite Cogordan for Valensole, and at once found a family there, which had sustained the loss of a child, suiting Marguerite every way in name and age. But a strange circumstance overthrew the poor girl's hopes. The parents, while admitting that they had once lost their child, declared at the same time that they had long since recovered her, and produced a young woman whom they called their daughter. The unfortunate Marguerite was rejected by the parents; they looked coldly on her, and repulsed the testimonies of her affection. This cruel and unexpected disavowal threw the poor young woman into a violent fever. This warmth of feeling smote upon the hearts of the parents. They began to doubt, and, finally, opened their arms to the new-comer, declaring their belief that she was their own—her real child.

Hitherto the false Marguerite had held her peace, or, at least, had made no confession to explain the mystery. But being now closely interrogated, she avowed that her name was Baptistine Bartelet, and that she was the daughter of a fisherman at Marseilles. She had left her home, she stated, when a child, and had been picked up by a blind fiddler, with whom she had travelled for several years up and down the country. Passing one day through Valensoles, three years after the disappearance of Marguerite Cogordan, the parents of that girl had seen her, believed they recognised her to be their daughter, and

had claimed her as such. Fearing to be sent back to a home where she had been ill used, she had given countenance to the deception, and had kept her real name secret. She remained with the Cogordans, and custom had at length made her feel as if she were truly in her own home. Once, indeed, she had tried to find service some where else, but she had been brought back.

This disclosure made Marguerite Cogordan happy, and she now (1837 being the date of these events) lives with her long-lost parents.

"DEAR THIRTY-NINE."

"Dear Thirty-Nine!" "So farewell, poor Thirty-Nine!" "Farewell, poor Thirty-Nine! what a portion of my life has been spent in thee! Thou hast sheltered me from the prime of life to its decline, and now I must bid good bye to thee!"—*Sir Walter Scott's Diary.*

[The following verses were suggested by these affectionate allusions of Sir Walter Scott to his house in North Castle Street, Edinburgh, and by the neglect in which we now hold what will one day assuredly be an object of deep interest.]

Unhonoured by the passing throng,
Dear Thirty-Nine, thou art,
Unhonoured, haply, wilt be long,
Though genius, soul, and heart,
Wisdom, and wit, and heavenly song,
Might well to thee impart
A fitting power the passer's breast to warm,
If e'er such attributes to stone gave such a charm.
A spirit of diviner mould
Was never lent to earth,
To hallow mountain, lake, and wold,
To brighten hall and hearth
To draw sweet wisdom from things old,
And give new treasures birth—
Than that which breathed erewhile within these walls,
Freighting each breath with tales and pleasant madrigals.

Strange things are we!—that ever look
With scorn upon our own,
And only such grey wrecks can brook
As Time has overthrown:—
Yes, as we love the stunning rook
That maketh old trees known,
So hold we e'en deformities most dear,
When we through them are told, that "Time's hand has been here!"

On him, dear Thirty-Nine, who pass,
Beneath thy roof his prime,
Not yet is planted, firm and fast,
The current stamp of time:
Still on the air the moanings last
Of that funeral chime,
Which pealed above his newly hearsed remains,
Mingling with sounds of wail from all old Scotland's plains.

Not yet on him hath sifting age
Its charter-seal impress:
But, though for others such a gage
May well be in request
His, surely, and his glorious page,
Needs not old Time's attest,
So high he soared above his whole compeers,
One of the great who rise, once in a thousand years.
Yet e'en with him doth tyrant use
Still vindicate its right,
And every careless passer views,
As some base common sight,
This modern temple of the muse,
The source whence such delight
As never welled from one sole fount before,
Flowed o'er the charmed earth, like sea without a shore.

A potent rival, it is true,
Dear Thirty-Nine, thou hast,
A rural pile o'er which he threw
A glory doomed to last;
And herefrom partly may accrue
Less reverence for the past,
Less keen remembrance of the scenes bygone,
With which thou wert mixed up, and wert mixed up alone.

But come there surely will a day
When thou shalt have the meed
Of honour due from grave and gay,
From all whose eyes can read:
Yes! every stone thy walls display
Shall yet be as a creed
By which the pilgrims of the earth shall swear,
While musing on the mighty one, once dwelling there.

With fondlest love Ferrara keeps
Her Ariosto's chair,
And o'er his sculptured ink-vase weeps,
Whence issued streams so rare;
And we—whose bard clamb loftier steep,
And breathed sublimer air—
We shall not long neglect this sacred shrine,
Our northern Ariosto's home, dear Thirty-Nine!

T. S.

BRAZILIAN VESPER BELL.

In Brazil, all journeys are suspended at the Ave Maria, that is, the vespers to the virgin, which commence after sunset. Instead of a curfew, a very simple and pleasing circumstance announces this period in the country. A large beetle (called *Pelidnota testacea*), with silver wings, just then issues forth, and, by the winding of its small but solemn and sonorous horn, proclaims the hour of prayer. A coincidence so striking, and so regular and frequent in its occurrence as this, was not likely to escape the honour of a religious superstition to account for it. Accordingly, the Brazilians regard it as a sacred institution, supposing that the insect is a herald expressly commissioned by the Virgin to announce the time of her evening prayer. Hence it is constantly called *Escaravelho* Ave Maria, that is, the Ave Maria Beetle. "On the hill

of Santa Theresa," says Dr Walsh, "I have heard it of an evening humming round the convent, and joining its harmonious bass to the sweet chant of the nuns within at their evening service."

A RUSSIAN MOTHER.

The maintenance of military fidelity and discipline seems to the present Emperor of Russia an object for which all human ties may well be sacrificed. In March 1837, a woman named Maria Nikoforocona, the widow of a peasant, received a letter from her son Novik, a soldier in the stationary battalion of Tambow. In this letter the son stated that the barbarous treatment which he and others endured at the hands of the regimental officers, had driven him to the resolution of deserting from a service into which he had been forced at the first, and that, in a few days after the date of his communication, he hoped to see and embrace his mother. The first thing done by the mother on receipt of this letter was to carry it to the governor of the province, who, astonished at the unnatural character of the action, sent the woman away without taking any steps in consequence of her disclosure. Some days later, the deserter arrived at the dwelling of his mother, who received him with open arms, and loaded him with caresses. But she took an opportunity immediately afterwards to go to the police officers, to whom she delivered up the child to whom she had given birth, and whom she had nursed at her breasts. Compelled by his duty, the governor addressed a detailed report of the case to the emperor. Nicholas viewed the matter differently from the governor. The autocrat issued an ukase, decreeing a silver medal to Maria Nikoforocona, with these words engraved on it, "Devotion to the Throne." This medal was to be suspended from her neck by the ribbon of the Order of St Anne, and the woman was further secured, for the rest of her life, against the chances of want. It was moreover decreed that the circumstances of the case should be published in all the journals of the empire, that its subjects might imitate this example of fidelity and devotion to the throne.

The young soldier, in accordance with the military regulations of Russia, was subjected to the knout, and died under the blows. The unnatural parent wears the decoration assigned to her, with as much pride as if she had won it by the most virtuous action.

MIGRATORY EXPEDITION OF ANTS.

The ant cities, as they ought to be called, of Brazil, are of such amazing size, that they have more the character of structures reared by human hands, than that of monuments of insect industry and skill. They are conical mounds of clay, which their tiny architects rear to the height of ten or twelve feet; their circumference is nine or ten feet. A hard yellow clay forms the external coat; the inside is divided by a number of horizontal floors or stories, of a hard black earth, in thin plates, which sometimes shine like Japan-ware. These habitations are peopled by myriads of ants of a large size, and a brown colour. They have the power of exuding from their bodies a viscid fluid, by which they moisten the clay to a consistency fit for making floors. Some species form covered ways in this manner, and tunnels or avenues of this description have been found stretching for a considerable distance from one settlement to another, and through these the ants are enabled to make pretty long journeys unseen. They sometimes migrate, and their expeditions are attended with truly remarkable circumstances. In fact, they resemble on a small scale the invasions of Attila and his million of mounted barbarians into the fruitful and glowing plains of Italy—leaving a parched desert in their wake. When these insect Huns set out in such enterprises, they proceed right forward in a straight line, just as the laden bee flies to its hive, and they devour every thing in their way which is eatable, like a cloud of locusts "warping on the wind." It once happened, during one of these expeditions which was undertaken near the city of Rio de Janeiro, that a garden obstructed their line of march—a deep ditch of water in particular seemed an insurmountable obstacle; however, a stick happened accidentally to be lying across it; this the ants used as a bridge, and over it they poured by myriads, so that in a few hours the garden was swarming full of them, and every thing of vegetable kind disappeared. From this they proceeded on till they came to the house of the Swedish consul, through which they actually made their way. The gentleman who inhabited it was suddenly awakened during the night by a horrid sensation, and starting from his couch, he found himself covered with these insects, whose crawling and biting had awoke him. The house was full of them; there was neither recess nor apartment nor closet exempt from their presence. Impelled by their instinctive tendency to advance, they pursued their onward course until the whole body passed through, and next morning not a single one of them was to be seen. Strange to say, the ants devoured every other insect in their progress, so that the singular visitation was not without its use. Spiders, cockroaches, and every thing of the kind which infested the house, became the prey of these nocturnal visitors; and when they disappeared, it was found that every other species of insect had disappeared along with them.

WALKING.

Walking is the best possible exercise: habituate yourself to walk very far. The Europeans boast of having subdued the horse to the uses of man, but I doubt whether we have not lost more than we have gained by the use of that animal. No one has occasioned so much the degeneracy of the human body. An Indian goes on foot nearly as far in a day, for a long journey, as an enfeebled white does on his horse, and he will tire the best horses. A little walk of half an hour in the morning, when you first rise, is advisable. It shakes off sleep, and produces other good effects in the animal economy.—*Jefferson's Memoirs.*

EDINBURGH: Printed and Published by W. and R. CHAMBERS, 19, Waterloo Place.—Agents, W. S. OAR, London; G. YOUNG, Dublin; J. MACLEOD, Glasgow; and sold by all booksellers.